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New Statesman

DUNCAN CAMPBELL
Cyprus 'spies'

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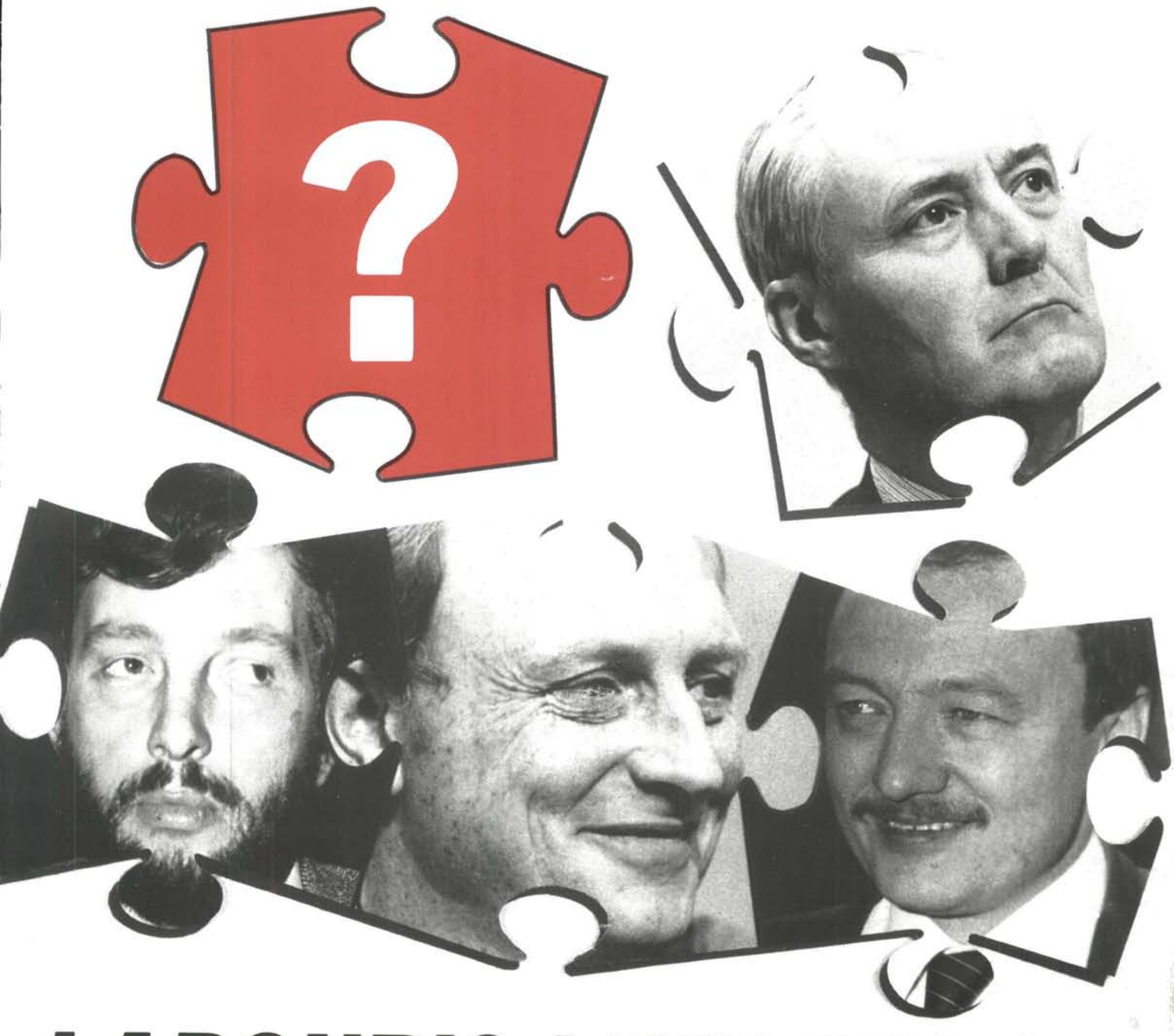

LABOUR'S LEFT REJIGS

FELIX PIRANI: Star Wars won't work, can't work

SHORT STORY: Grace Paley

CHRIS MULLIN: Pub bomb confessions

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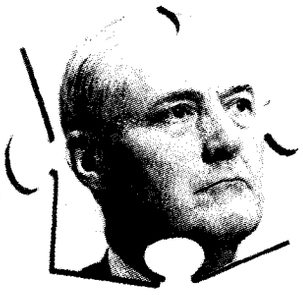

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'PICNIC' AT MONTE BELLO

As Faber's bring out her *Clouds of Deceit — the Deadly Legacy of Britain's Bomb Tests*, JOAN SMITH takes us back to 3 October 1952 when Britain's first A-bomb went off

BLACK WOMEN ORGANISE

'I hated writing this article for a mostly white readership' says ZHANA — but has done it, to explain why black women organise autonomously

BITTER LEMONS

Yes there's *much* more to be said about the Cyprus 'spies' fiasco: DUNCAN CAMPBELL on the legal officers' efforts to cover up what was never secret

CHILDREN'S BOOKS SPECIAL

MICHAEL ROSEN, NASEEM KHAN and GILLIAN WILCE inspect this season's crop of books for toddlers through to adolescents

LOW AND BEHOLD

JOHN SPURLING on an exhibition of David Low's cartoons

New Statesman

Vol 110 No 2849 1 November 1985

Bungled from start to finish

EXCEPT FOR *THE TIMES*, which took the extraordinary line that what was done to the defendants in the Cyprus spy case should not be criticised because they would have been treated even worse in the hands of the KGB, the condemnation has been virtually universal. The trial was a vastly expensive fiasco.

Two points require stressing. The first is that the case was tried under conditions of plainly excessive melodrama. Virtually the whole of it was heard *in camera*. There are, of course, perfectly legitimate reasons why trials, or parts of trials, are so conducted. But it is not legitimate for a prosecution to apply for *in camera* proceedings when the main purpose is to create around the trial an atmosphere designed spuriously to persuade the jury that issues of the highest national security are at stake — in this case that talk of the very existence and activity of 9 Signal Regiment put national security at the gravest risk. Courts have become notably willing to accept any assertion by the Crown about national security, but in this case as in others the judge should have resisted the pressure, which in effect deprives defendants of the basic right of a fair trial in open court.

The second point is the light that the case has again thrown on the prurient and obsessive reaction of the armed forces to homosexuality. As a House of Commons Select Committee accepted in 1981 the security risk/blackmail argument for discriminating against lesbians and gays is 'at best a poor one'. The armed forces of, amongst others, France, Belgium, Holland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark do not criminalise lesbians and gays.

There remains the question of who must take political responsibility for the Cyprus fiasco. The Prime Minister was aware of what was going on at an early stage: and the Attorney General was required, as always, to give his fiat for an Official Secrets Act prosecution. But, given the seriousness of the allegations, there was no reason why either should oppose prosecution.

But the man responsible for making the professional judgment on whether this case should be brought was the Director of Public Prosecutions. Sir Thomas Hetherington has repeatedly said that prosecutions are only justified if there is a 51 per cent chance of them succeeding. As Duncan Campbell argues on page 10, the prosecution's overall case was in fact so weak that even learners in the DPP's office should have laughed it from their in trays. If there is any shred of accountability left in this government, Sir Thomas Hetherington should now resign. □

Waddington on true form again

THREE WEEKS AGO David Waddington, the Home Office minister, was making sensible, liberal-sounding noises about using government contracts to enforce equal racial opportunities in industry. It rang a bit hollow: we have a minister for race relations like the South Africans have a minister of Justice.

And it didn't last long: now we're back to the David

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Waddington we have always known. Waddington says there's 'something fishy' about the large numbers of Bangladeshis arriving in Britain. The number of those refused entry increased from 72 in the third quarter of 1984 to 684 in the third quarter of 1985 and the number of 'absconders' increased from 2 to 24.

Even if the figures are odd, they are very small. There is something very fishy indeed about a minister getting so worked up about 22 extra Bangladeshis at large in the country that he deliberately implies that MPs are personally dishonest, but then declines to name names.

Waddington's antipathy to anyone challenging immigration officers' decisions goes back many years. In 1969 he was one of a small group of Tories who voted against the introduction of the appeals machinery we now have. And the Home Office has been gunning for the system of MPs making representations to stop the removal of a visitor denied entry for some time. In 1983, a secret post-election briefing paper said: 'The practice of deferring removal when a case is taken up by an MP invites abuse': but that it would be difficult to abolish because 'members are jealous of this privilege'. Shortly afterwards Waddington wrote to MPs saying that in future he would only accept representations from one MP on behalf of each visitor.

Mr Waddington, though is in a sense right — though for the wrong reasons. The system *is* unsatisfactory. Some newspapers have spoken of it as an 'appeal system'. But there is no right of appeal before removal for refused visitors. There should be: refused passengers ought to be allowed to appeal against immigration decisions while still in the country. This is already the case for passengers who are refused entry, but hold a visa or entry clearance: the system is quick, simple and public. Such an extension was proposed both by the Wilson committee on immigration appeals in 1967 and more recently in draft copies of the Commission for Racial Equality's report on immigration control procedures.

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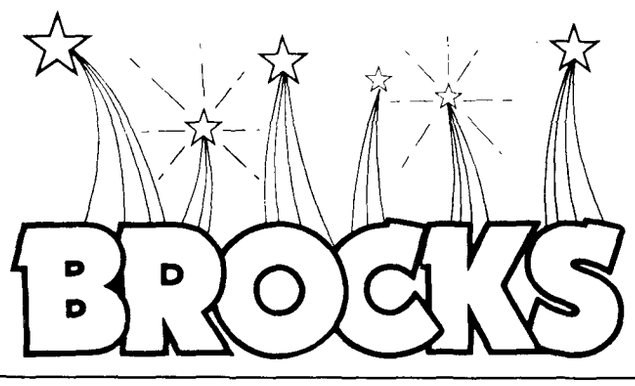

This might in effect mean visas and entry clearances being issued in Britain rather than abroad, though it is difficult to see why the Home Office should object to that: there would still be an incentive to get permission to enter before coming to Britain, to avoid the possibility of a wasted air fare. But immigration officers might find it harder to behave like minor colonial administrators when in Harmondsworth than they evidently do in Dhaka. And it would let Clare Short, Jeremy Corbyn and Max Madden get some sleep. □

'Liver Aid' has still not gotten through

DESPITE ALL the confusion surrounding Liverpool City Council's mounting financial crisis, its Militant leadership's air of perennial omniscience still persuaded some people that it *must* have some trick card up its sleeve. It is now clear that it had no card, no sleeve and quite possibly no arm either.

This week's package rescue deal, first sketched by Sheffield's David Blunkett at Labour's Bournemouth party conference, has been put together by four expert outsiders. Militant in Liverpool may have thought that the only thing that mattered was continuing spectacular confrontation with a Tory government. But a tactic based on the notion that the council and its employees should 'defend jobs and services' after the money had run out by means of an 'all-out definite strike' was as ritualistic a piece of politics as it sounded.

The experts' proposals that would square the city's books in this financial year and lift the threat of redundancy from its 31,000 workers has the support of Neil Kinnock, David Blunkett, the Labour NEC, eight trade union general secretaries and the ten unions locally representing the council's workforce. Any other council leadership would have found it difficult to turn down a plan with such backing.

But for Militant this whole episode is just one skirmish on some supposed road to national confrontation with the Tory government. As Kinnock rightly pointed out at Bournemouth, it is a curious campaign to 'defend jobs and services' that involves the tactical sacking of 31,000 council workers.

The idea that Liverpool by itself in UK 1985 could sustain some civic version of Trotsky's Transitional Programme is evidently absurd. Yet it now seems that Militant in Liverpool is still determined to refuse constructive compromise and go down asserting not only that the impossible is possible, but that it only didn't happen because elements in the Labour movement (notably Comrade Kinnock) have behaved as traitors to the working class.

Indeed, fitting up the traitors has begun already. The day after the National Union of Teachers brought its successful action against Liverpool to keep the city's schools open, deputy leader Derek Hatton accused Jim Ferguson, NUT secretary in Liverpool, on local radio of being part of a Communist/Conservative conspiracy against the city. Hatton declaimed that by bringing an action against a socialist council in the Tory courts, the NUT would be held to blame for all that subsequently happened to Liverpool. (In court, the council was driven to rely on some very curious precedents to defend its decision to make teachers redundant — the GCHQ case, for one, as a precedent for an authority not having to consult unions; and Hertfordshire v. NUPE dinner ladies, for another, on a council's right to break national agreements.)

When Derek Hatton tells how 'many, many NUPE members' have been coming to him to denounce their local union leadership's opposition to what the council has been doing, he probably *believes* it. No one else does any more. □

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CROYDON PROVIDES AN AWFUL WARNING FOR NORMAN FOWLER

MORE THAN two years after the present Housing Benefit system was introduced, at least one borough still can't get to grips with it. And the changes that the government is about to introduce could make things even worse. CHRISTIAN WOLMAR reports

CROYDON PRIDES itself on being London's lowest-rated borough. It's also the most inefficient in paying out Housing Benefit: two months ago its system for making payments collapsed completely.

More than 14,000 new claimants have been waiting for their money for up to two years, and at least £750,000 has been lost in overpayments. The council leader, Peter Bowness, one of the senior Tory local politicians, has admitted that there has been a 'major failure in administration'. There are now 26,000 items waiting to be dealt with.

In August, Croydon council closed its benefit office to deal with an estimated 4,000 backlog of cases. But although 5,700 were processed that month, when the office re-opened there were still 14,000 cases in the pipeline — which Bowness admits they didn't even know were there. Regular monitoring since then has continued to unearth new cases from the non-existent filing system.

The breakdown in service has meant more than a simple inconvenience for some claimants. The council's policy was to deal with its own tenants first. Private tenants were left at risk of eviction. Andrew Paine, 20, living in a bedsit, earned so little that almost all his rent should have been paid by the council. But despite filling in several forms he received no money and his landlord evicted him when the arrears built up to £400. A 54-year-old man suffering from depression owed £700 in arrears and was forced to leave the flat where he had lived for ten years because of the council's bungling. Letters from tenants still go unanswered and no one ever answers the telephone.

Useless computer

The troubles date back to April 1983 when the present system was introduced. It was intended to unify and simplify the overlapping rate rebates, rent rebates and allowances, and to transfer responsibility from the DHSS to local councils. In common with other authorities Croydon misjudged the number of claimants, which increased from 10,000 to 39,000 — and so didn't take on enough extra staff. This failure was compounded in April 1984 by the introduction of a computer system bought secondhand from Gloucester council which didn't have proper documentation, and which wouldn't do what was required of it.

There was cabinet space for only 6,000 files with the remainder being left on window sills and the floor; no annual review of cases was carried out — in breach of the council's statutory obligation — and there was no staff training.

Appalling housekeeping

The Council has had to set aside a £500,000 contingency fund to cover overpayments and the finance director, Jim Watts, estimates that at least a further £250,000 will be needed this year. A council report suggests that 1,200 people are currently receiving money they are no longer entitled to and 1,300 are being overpaid — a terrible political embarrassment for a council which prides itself on good housekeeping.

Although councillors in Lambeth and Liverpool are being threatened with surcharge for allegedly wasting their authorities' money, there's no question of those in Croydon suffering a similar fate, even though the sums involved are far higher. The law says there has to be 'wilful misconduct' rather than simple negligence for councillors to be held responsible.

Council leader Peter Bowness, who's also chair of the London Boroughs Association and the recently appointed chair of the London Co-ordinating Committee which is overseeing the handover of the GLC's functions after abolition, admits that he had no idea of what the eventual losses might be. He tells the *NS* that although the council has set up an enquiry team to see went wrong, 'I find it impossible to understand that there should have been been a failure of administration of this magnitude'. Opposition leader Trevor Laffin is equally baffled — the Labour group has been just as slow in exposing the problem — but says: 'The council is particularly zealous in its financial restraint and this creates an atmosphere where staff find it difficult to ask for sufficient resources to do their jobs.'

Worse to come?

Nick Raynsford of the London Housing Aid Centre suggests Croydon isn't unique: 'Although nowhere else is as bad, there have been major problems in Hackney and Birmingham, for example, and Lambeth and Lewisham are currently having difficulties. I don't think there's an authority in the country that's administering the rules correctly as they are so complex.'

He points out that the proposals in the Green Paper for the overhaul of the social security system will make things much worse: 'The government has said it will no longer subsidise administrative costs of the Housing Benefit scheme and the proposal to make claimants pay 20 per cent of their costs will add further complications.' ●

Croydon Advertiser

Smiling bravely, Peter Bowness: he presided over an almighty cock-up

It's cheaper to build homes than pay bed and breakfast

WHILE COUNCIL house building in Britain has been cut by over 50 per cent in the last five years, and DHSS estimates — say Shelter — underestimate by thousands the number of homeless, the government's response has been to squeeze public spending even tighter. There isn't enough money to build any more houses, they say.

In one London borough, Brent, the GLC-funded Local Economy Resource Unit (LERU) has taken a closer look at the argument and concluded that it would actually save money to build homes.

Their newly published report Homes Not Dole *concludes that local tax and ratepayers would be £34 million better off if Brent Council embarked on a housebuilding programme to provide 250 homes over the next five years.*

The unit bases its sums on the fact that it costs £5,000 a year to keep a homeless family in bed and breakfast accommodation. By 1990, unless more homes are found, there will be 1500 families in bed and breakfast — at a cost to the local authority of some £7 million — plus a further 1500 in temporary accommodation.

The report also looks at the cost to the community of supporting building workers on the dole. The government no longer keeps figures on the trades of workers who are unemployed, but LERU estimates that in Brent at least 2,800 of the 16,000 registered unemployed are builders. The scheme would create work for 1300 of them, saving £6,500 a year in benefits for each one.

The proposal can obviously be applied throughout Britain, where according to the National Federation of Housing Associations 800,000 new homes are needed.

The Transport and General Workers Union has promised to distribute Homes Not Dole *throughout its construction branches, in order to build up pressure on the Government for a change in housing policy.*

And the report has been welcomed by local churches who recently rejected a council plea for church halls or crypts to be opened up as dormitories for the homeless.

Kate Holman

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IS KENNETH BAKER UNRAVELLING ALL PATRICK JENKIN'S PLANS?

City Syndication

Jenkin (right) wanted to privatise local authority services. Baker's less sure

LAST FEBRUARY the government published a consultation paper proposing legislation to force reluctant local authorities to put out to tender services in a number of key areas, such as school catering, refuse collection and vehicle maintenance. Now it looks as though they're having second thoughts. WENDY JONES reports

THE PAPER amounted to a recognition that privatisation, as a voluntary measure, had not taken off: even on the most generous estimate, only a minority of authorities were practicing it. Expectations were that legislation would be laid before parliament this autumn.

But expectations seem to have changed. There's now considerable speculation — from both supporters and opponents of privatisation — that next week's Queen's Speech will contain no mention of any bill on compulsory tendering for local services.

Alistair Macrae, local government secretary of the National Union of Public Employees, notes a distinct cooling in the government's attitude. He often speaks on privatisation at meetings of professional associations and is usually cast opposite a Tory politician. 'But recently, three of these associations have told me they have had great difficulty in getting anyone to speak in favour of privatisation.' He reckons the government may be quietly preparing to shelve the issue.

Surprisingly, a similar prediction comes from David Saunders, the editor of the pro-private enterprise magazine, *Public Service Review* (financed by the private contractor industry). He agrees that the government is 'not expected to legislate in this session of parliament'. There are other priorities, he says.

The right-wing Adam Smith Institute, whose report on compulsory tendering inspired the government's consultation document, has also gone quiet on the subject. Copies of the report have sold out, says the Institute, but there are no plans to print any more.

The Department of the Environment received 450 responses to the consultation document, but will not, of course, pre-empt the Queen's Speech. A spokesperson added that whether or not the proposals find a place in the legislative programme, 'the government is totally committed to the business of competition'. One does not doubt it, but why should the government not back up ideology with action?

In part, it's because the legislative programme is tight. The priority is to bring in tax cuts before the next election — and whereas the sale of British Gas will bring in easy money, selling off the right to empty dustbins won't. The government must also be pondering the possibility of defeat, of introducing a law so unpopular as to be unenforceable. The proposals have been denounced not only by Labour councils and trade unions, who fear loss of jobs and question any real savings, but also by Conservative councillors who fear a further loss of local power — and don't like being told what to do by the DoE any more than do Labour councillors. ●

Scots Tories in revolt

THE TRUE seriousness of the deepening crisis facing the Scottish Conservative Party has become apparent after a private party meeting last weekend voted overwhelmingly to oppose the government's plan to close the Gartcosh steel mill in Lanarkshire next year. The Conservatives' west of Scotland area council, which covers half of all the Scottish parliamentary constituencies, agreed four to one (47 to 11) to a motion urging the government to grant Gartcosh a reprieve for the next three years.

The decision bears out what the Tory Party's 'save Gartcosh' lobby has been saying for months — that the leadership in Scotland is out of touch with the party grassroots on the issue. They cite as an example the press release put out by the Scottish Tory chairperson (and Thatcher appointee), Sir James Goold, greeting the announcement of the plan to shut Gartcosh and shed at least 700 jobs as 'good news for Scotland'. He has since publically derided prominent Tories like Iain Lawson and Ann Dickson who are campaigning to save the plant as 'a small but vociferous minority'.

Internal critics have also accused Scottish Party president Iain McCrone of trying to gag them by circulating a letter urging Tories not to debate controversial issues like Gartcosh through the media. The Tories who were responsible for leaking what happened last weekend to the press were fiercely condemned by the meeting's chairperson, Margaret Walker.

Behind the Tories' unprecedented revolt is the threat of virtual annihilation north of the border at the next election, with most of Scotland's 21 Tory MPs vulnerable. Such dire straits have provoked desperate remedies. One constituency party executive and the 20-strong executive of the Scottish Confederation of Conservative Trade Unionists have threatened to resign from office and Iain Lawson, thrice a Conservative parliamentary candidate, has said that he will leave the Tory Party if Gartcosh closes. Some Scottish Conservative women are this weekend even considering chaining themselves up outside the British Steel Corporation's headquarters in London as part of a planned protest against the Gartcosh closure.

Rob Edwards

Community groups scramble to get on the air

APPLICATIONS to the Home Office for the new experimental Community Radio franchises close this Thursday (31 October). The 21 licences available have been massively over-subscribed, and there are criticisms from some black community groups that the system will discriminate against them.

There are to be two types of licence: one for small neighbourhood stations broadcasting with a 5km radius and the other which will cater for larger neighbourhoods or 'communities of interests', which Leon Brittan defined as 'ethnic groups or the enthusiasts for a particular kind of music.' The Home Office has appointed a six-member panel to vet applications, which has been inundated with applications from pirate stations, radio buffs, gays, women, ethnic groups and other community radio groups. About 400 enquiries have been made and more than 127 applications have been filed.

Community groups have already questioned the number of licences made available. The Home Office expects groups to 'share time', but this doesn't seem likely to succeed. In London, for example, there will be only two 'community of interest' stations: one for north London (for which there have been 35 applications) and one for south London (for which there have been 12 applications). These two will be expected to carry all the different minority interest and ethnic programming for that area. Ricky McCarthy of the Afro-Carribean Community Radio Project says: 'We wish to correct the imbalance in the media and time-sharing won't solve it'.

Other community groups, while recognising the need to remain solvent, are worried about the possible domination of the system by business interests. There have also been criticisms of the composition of the panel, two of whom come from the BBC and the IBA, which have a vested interest in the failure of community radio.

In London more than 59 groups are applying for the five small neighbourhood licences. One of them is believed to be David Dimbleby's controversial newspaper group, the *Richmond and Twickenham Times*.

Pirates going straight?

Radio Jackie, one of the longest running pirates whose operators were fined only a few weeks ago is understood to be applying for a local franchise to broadcast from Sutton. Despite the fact that this group has broken the law for the past 16 years it is supported in its application by 65 mainly Tory councillors in the Kingston area, according to Peter Streams, Jackie's spokesperson. He pointed out that the Tory MP and now government minister Angela Rumbold went on air on Jackie making an appeal for support. The Home Office has said that pirates will not be discriminated against.

Feroz Khan

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AFTER THE CND DEMO — A BIG FREEZE?

A MAJOR CAMPAIGN calling for a worldwide freeze on the deployment of nuclear weapons is to be launched on 13 November in London with the backing of an array of patrons drawn primarily — but not exclusively — from the Alliance parties. JAMIE DETTMER reports

Paul Mattsson

CND — partners or competitors?

THE FREEZE Movement, which is partly modelled on the three-year old counterpart Nuclear Freeze Campaign in America, hopes to unite unilateralist and multilateralist disarmers.

'It is unlikely', according to Will Howard, the Freeze Movement's national organiser and a former forward planner at CND, 'that the majority of the population will accept unilateralism as a first step' in the attempt to get the disarmament process going. He believes that 'many people in and not in the peace movement would support the idea of a Freeze'.

Howard insists that the Freeze can attract supporters from right across the political spectrum, a belief partly borne out by the list of patrons, which includes Denis Healey, Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Dame Judith Hart, Labour MP for Lanark, Len Murray, and Richard Body, Tory MP for Holland and Boston.

However, most of the Freeze's patrons seem to come from the SDP and the Liberal Party, including Paddy Ashdown, Liberal MP for Yeovil, Richard Holme, a policy adviser to the Liberal leader David Steel, Tom McNally, an ex-Labour MP and now a senior-ranking Social Democrat, and Lord Sainsbury, an SDP peer.

So far, official relations are cordial between the Freeze and CND, with Meg Beresford, CND's general secretary, welcoming the new movement on the grounds that 'there is room for different peace campaigns and initiatives' which can all help to pressurise for disarmament, a sentiment shared by Will Howard.

Senior CND members, though, fear that the Freeze could obscure the forceful clarity of the unilaterist demand and that it could provoke divisions within a peace movement already suffering some disagreements about campaigning priorities. Overt, but restrained, criticism of the Freeze Movement can be read in the forthcoming issue of *Campaign*, CND's house journal.

Freeze supporters believe that their movement can make a practical contribution as, according to Dame Judith Hart, 'no first use, Freeze, *any* constructive step is useful'. But there seems to be confusion about the nature of the measure it is demanding. While Tom McNally believes, in line with SDP policy, that a freeze should be called for 'if the Geneva talks fail or don't achieve the breakthrough everyone hopes for', Richard Holme, following David Steel, emphasises that a freeze should occur now: 'it is not a fall-back position'. ●

Refined oil evades embargo

BRITAIN's oil embargo against South Africa has a loophole, the Foreign Office admits. Although there's a ban on the export of crude oil, it doesn't cover refined oil products.

Last week the Commonwealth summit in Nassau included an oil embargo in their package of 'measures'. Even before the Commonwealth agreement, Sir Geoffrey Howe had said that 'we do not export oil to South Africa' and this along with other Foreign Office statements implied that the ban covered all oil products.

But the Foreign Office now admits that refined oil products are excluded. It says that although this exclusion is a loophole, 'UK exports of products are small'. Official statistics show that nearly £6 million worth of refined oil products were exported to South Africa in the first eight months of this year. Most of these were lubricants, essential for the South African economy.

Shell, BP and Castrol are the main British-owned companies which market lubricants in South Africa. Spokespersons from the UK head offices of the three firms said last week that they did not supply embargoed oil to their South African subsidiaires.

Martin Bailey

MISCELLANY

Unreal lives

Royalty is, of course, different from you and me. When Charles and Di had their hugely popular public chat with Sir Alastair Burnet, they secured an unprecedented agreement allowing them to view the finished programme and make changes. The Princess, in fact, did make one change — tantalisingly, we don't know *which* and ITN won't tell us. But ITN journalists are concerned at the precedent this sets, and have nightmares of Arthur Scargill trying to throw *his* weight around the cutting room. The Chapel wrote to the editor of ITN demanding clarification — particularly in the light of a planned ITN documentary about the Royal couple next year. In reply the editor asserted that the agreement with the Palace was 'unique' and that 'in the final analysis, ITN would have the right to cancel the transmission of any programme we were not happy with'. Goodness, how brave. Still, Sir Alastair already has his knighthood.

Times change

There was a time when Joe Haines had rather a low view of Robert Maxwell. The man, he told a Mirror *NUJ chapel meeting last year, was a liar, a cheat and a crook — or words to that effect. But a lot of water seems to have flowed under Holborn Circus since then. No one at the* Mirror *today seems closer to Maxwell than our Joe — writing his leaders and ghosting his articles. Now Maxwell has rewarded this sudden switch to loyalism by elevating Haines to the Mirror Group board — by Fleet Street standards an extraordinary thing to have done to a working hack — and odder still for a working hack to accept. But, as a colleague said, Joe always enjoyed being a press secretary. Once upon a time it was for Harold Wilson. Today, it seems, it's for Captain Bob.*

M'learned agent

One of the many, many, bizarre aspects of the Cyprus case was the behaviour of defence solicitor Mr David Bray, who — unusually for such cases — represented six out of seven of the defendants. He also appears to double as media agent for witnesses. A couple of journalists were interrupted by Bray while carrying out an interview with a witness, a Filipino dancer and alleged sexual partner called Josie. Although she was quite happy giving the interview, Bray hustled her away and told the journalists that they should speak to her only through him. He then phoned them to say that 'fees would be involved'. Which breaches Law Society practice guidelines, and would also — had the approach not been rejected by the journalists — have been a procurement of a breach of a Press Council ruling that witnesses shouldn't be 'bought' by journalists. Mr Bray, who we understand is writing a book on the trial, has refused to answer *NS* questions about any of this.

His not to reason why

Derek Foster, thrust blinking into the limelight by his surprise elevation to Labour chief whip, has an awkward decision to make: what does he think about gay rights? His party's policy is clear enough: for them. Equally clear is the policy of the Salvation Army, of which he's also a member: against. The dilemma could hardly be more acute. This is what Labour's 1982 programme approved by the NEC said: 'There must be a change of approach to homosexuals by many sections of the community and in particular by government bodies and the police. They must set a good

example by taking positive steps to eliminate discrimination.' And this is a very short extract from a Salvation Army policy statement: 'Both male and female homosexual behaviour promoted and accepted as an alternative lifestyle present a serious threat to the integrity, quality and solidarity of society as a whole... [However] homosexual behaviour, like any deviant behaviour, is capable of control: not all homosexuals are incapable of normal heterosexual relations. Some homosexuals achieve a happy heterosexual marriage... zzzz'

Virgin's territory

News just in from Ballinspittle. Despite the rash of bowing statues of the Virgin throughout the Emerald Isle, Ballinspittle has consolidated its runaway lead in having theirs *first*. The grotto has now been wired for sound, two new toilets have been erected, an extremely tall concrete street light towers over them and a new pavement has been laid out on the opposite verge. But all this is outshone by the two very modern telephone kiosks bang next to the grotto for hacks to file their copy. Ballinspittle has wanted a public phone for years — but presumably not two miles out of town.

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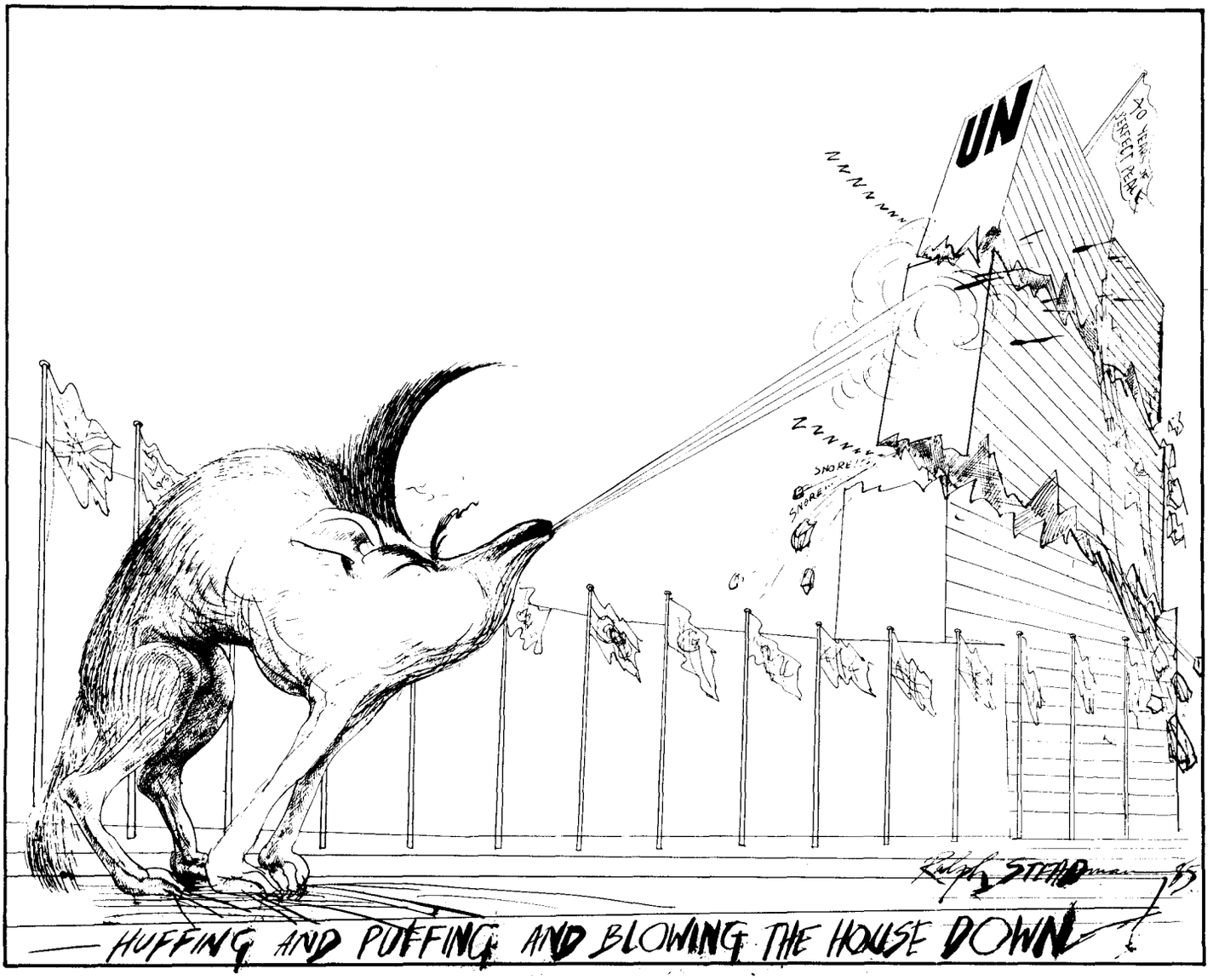

'This fable about the Lords'

We have swallowed a fable about the Lords, helped by selected TV clips. It is claimed they are superbly skilled elderly sages, uncontrollable by Whips. They can therefore correct defective Bills passed by Commons lobby-fodder. Ken Livingstone half-believed this, telling his followers in the battle over GLC abolitions: 'The Lords will protect us . . .'

There *are* some brilliant, experienced and independent-minded peers. Field Marshal Lord Carver, former Chief of the Defence Staff, '73-76, believes the UK suffers from 'delusions of nuclear grandeur', therefore nobody in the defence ministry or government listens.

But being old is not enough, whether a wine or a peer. Lord (Fenner) Brockway has mellowed over his 97 years. But 101-year-old Lord (Manny) Shinwell is increasingly vinegarish and self-congratulating. Even the 78-year-old Lord Chancellor, Lord Hailsham, childishly boasts of whispering 'bollocks' to the bishops.

The old and experienced can lose their skills. A few days ago 85-year-old Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls '62-82, complained of amendments to the massive Administration of Justice Bill, which he blamed on the Commons. But the amendments had been inserted by the Lords in committee, which he had not attended or read up in Lords *Hansard.*

Lord Denning can at least speak about the law without notes. Few peers, apart from Commons graduates and local government leaders like Lord (Andrew) McIntosh, have that fluency. Most read their speeches, word by stumbling word, from texts written by others. Recently a peer dropped a page of his brief, without noticing it. His brief-writer rushed to the *Hansard* writer, who kindly reinserted the unspoken missing page.

This increasing habit of moving amendments with briefs written by others dominated the debate on complex bills like that deregulating buses or abolishing the GLC and metropolitan councils. At one point Old Etonian Lord Teviot confessed that he was moving one transport amendment on his own behalf, in contrast to the scores he had moved for the Passenger Transport Executive Group and the Bus and Coach Council (which was crude enough to try to withhold his consultancy fees because he had under-achieved one evening). Lord Monk Bretton reads from briefs prepared by the Association of District Councillors. His fellow Tory, Lord Mottistone, proclaims he speaks on behalf of the CBI.

Such sectional interests produce the occasional revolt. The leading City accountant, Lord Benson, succeeded in emasculating the Administration of Justice Bill of its power automatically to punish 'rogue' directors. But the idea that their lordships are 'independent' is a naive exaggeration of relatively rare rebellions, such as on school buses. That one brought together the rural Tories and Catholics.

Although Tory Whips cannot guarantee attendance, they have over 400 self-proclaimed Tories on their books, or twice the 200 Labour and Alliance peers together. If the Opposition turn out even 75 per cent of their elderly peers on something like GLC abolition Tory Whips can steamroller them by turning out 170 peers, or under 45 per cent of theirs. When they did that this summer, one ran out of fingers and toes on which to count the millionaires.

The idea that the over 250 cross-benchers are all genuinely independent is a delusion. Many are disguised Tories, some Labour, some Liberal, whose jobs require them to seem nonpartisan. Their convenor, Baroness Hylton-Foster, is the widow of a Tory MP and Speaker. During the GLC Abolition debate she and a half-dozen fellow cross-benchers voted with the government more often than open Tories.

One of her charges is Lord (Dick) Marsh, now a fervent Thatcherite. He calls himself a 'cross-bencher' because he is chair of the Newspaper Publishers Association. This is as misleading as the CND badge Dick wore for selection as Labour's candidate for Greenwich . . .

Andrew Roth

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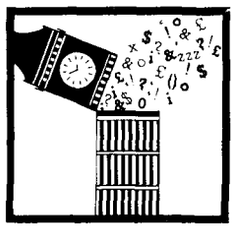

Why Neil Kinnock has a new spring in his step

PETER KELLNER

HAROLD MACMILLAN was once asked what had been the greatest influence on his administration when he was Prime Minister. 'Events, dear boy, events', he replied.

So it is today with Labour's Left. It is in turmoil not because of ideology or revolutionary calculation or even straightforward personal ambition, but because of events. Think back a year or so. The miners' union was engaged in its struggle with the Coal Board. Left-wing councils were planning to take on the government over rate-capping. Liverpool had recently won what it presented as a significant concession from Patrick Jenkin. Chris Mullin was editing *Tribune* as the house journal of the Campaign Group. The first constituency parties had called for Neil Kinnock's resignation. Militant was confidently expecting a number of its members to win selection in safe Labour seats.

Look at the scene today. The miners have been defeated, Nottinghamshire and South Derbyshire have split away, and Arthur Scargill no longer has clear control of the NUM's executive. The rate-capping campaign collapsed in a mixture of tragedy and farce. Militant has failed to install any of its nominees as new candidates in Labour seats — and is on the verge of losing control of Liverpool City Council. Chris Mullin has left *Tribune* and the paper has returned to supporting the Tribune Group of MPs. Kinnock's authority over the party is greater than ever.

Events, in short, have hammered the hard Left, some of whose erstwhile members — such as Ken Livingstone — have now become Kinnock loyalists. The shifts in mood and allegiance were epitomised by Ken Livingstone and John Smith (shadow industry minister) when they appeared on Channel Four's *A Week In Politics* just before the Labour Party conference. Careful viewers will have noticed that, try as he may, Peter Jay could not insert the thinnest political wedge between them. What viewers will not have known is that before the programme Smith and Livingstone privately had lunch and worked out how to present a common front. It is difficult to imagine, say, Aneurin Bevan and Herbert Morrison behaving like that in the 1950s, or Tony Benn and Denis Healey four or five years ago.

The realignment of today's Labour Party Left is, paradoxically, the result of one of the Left's greatest victories: the change in the way the party chooses its leader. Had Michael Foot's successor been chosen by the old method — MPs voting by secret ballot — it is likely that Hattersley would have won. (In the event Kinnock won the support of more MPs than Hattersley — but they voted by recorded ballot after a long campaign in which it became clear that Kinnock was the choice of most party and trade union members.)

Kinnock's victory deprived the Left of the glue it needed to remain cohesive. There is nothing like a right of centre Labour Party leader to keep the disparate elements that comprise the Left together. But without that role of internal opposition to perform, left-wingers have by stages had to confront the question: are they with Labour's new centre-left leadership or not? With each major challenge to the cohesion of the Left, more people have, directly or indirectly, been forced to make that choice. Increasingly they have chosen to back Kinnock.

RATE-CAPPING illustrates the point. The immediate cause of the Left falling out was the collapse of last winter's unrealistic strategy of confrontation. But this autumn, as Labour's councils start to draw their battle plans for next spring, it has become clear that almost all the councils that chose defiance last time will now set a legal rate.

Two weeks ago at a special meeting of the Greater London Labour Party union votes ensured a clear majority for acquiescence rather than illegality. The intrinsic argument was that the boroughs and the unions have learned from their mistakes. The political reality is that Kinnock's section of the Left has won. It is no accident that far Left local activists of yesteryear, like Ken Livingstone and Jack Dromey (of the transport workers' union), count themselves now among Kinnock's allies.

Equally, the erosion of Militant's power in Liverpool is a contingent result of its 'impossibilist' strategy; but the political focus for an alternative Labour leadership in the city has been provided by the brand of left-centre politics that Kinnock has fostered.

Within the unions the development is more complex, but follows broadly the same direction. At the Trades Union Congress that section of the Left that wanted to expel the engineers' union for taking government money for its postal ballots was outmanoeuvred. Union leaders like Ron Todd looked over the precipice and drew back. Although in theory the engineers (and the electricians) may still be expelled, the fact that expulsion was deferred means in effect that expulsion will not happen. The script has not been completed but the dénouement has, for all practical purposes, been agreed.

With unions being allowed to take money for ballots, and with ballots anyway now becoming a more regular feature of union life, the opportunities for far Left manipulation of union decisions is rapidly diminishing. Ken Gill and Alan Sapper are both sturdy, upright and thoroughly decent men; but I doubt whether white collar engineers, or television technicians, when they are asked to vote by individual ballot for Gill and Sapper's successors, will opt for such left-wing candidates.

Even Arthur Scargill, who was elected by individual ballot, may now find his days are numbered. Some left-wingers on the NUM executive have started to oppose him, for example over his tactics for repossessing the NUM's sequestered funds. And the decision by the miners in Nottinghamshire and South Derbyshire to secede from the NUM could lead to Scargill's nemesis.

The TUC — and hence the Labour Party — cannot recognise the new union. On the other hand, neither can they afford to let it flourish. Not the least of Labour's worries is the threat to its chances of winning, or holding, up to six East Midlands marginal seats at the next election.

There are two ways out of this. One — being discussed very privately — is that, once the bother over government money for ballots is out of the way, the new miners' union will merge with Eric Hammond's electricians. This fits with Hammond's ambition to weld Britain's best-paid, modern-technology, craft workers into a single union: his. It would also mean that the Notts and South Derby miners rejoin the TUC and Labour Party fold.

Such an outcome would greatly strengthen the Right within the TUC. The only alternative that would give left-wingers any comfort would be for the breakaway miners to rejoin the NUM. But the NUM would have to pay a price: and the greatest part of that price is Scargill's head on a platter marked 'resignation'. He wouldn't want to go and constitutionally he cannot be made to. But enough of the Left on the NUM's executive know the score; the issue is whether they have the courage to act on what they know to be the logic of the crisis they face.

One final observation. Kinnock often remarks that what he wants are not glorious defeats but mundane victories. One victory — and rather more than a mundane one — has been the battle to save the Inner London Education Authority as a directly elected body.

It has been achieved not by defiance or impossibilist tactics, but by tactical skill, the successful mobilisation of public opinion (including listening to what parents want) and careful use of the law courts. It has been a model campaign led by Tony Benn's former political adviser, Frances Morrell. Mrs Morrell no longer talks to Benn. And the venom with which she now attacks London's far Left and the Campaign Group is a wonder to behold.

So cheer up, everyone: Leftward look, the land is bright. □

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LURID IMAGINATIONS OF SHOW TRIAL PROSECUTORS

The acquittal (this week) of all seven of the defendants in the Cyprus spy trial has left the government and the prosecution with egg all over its face. The spy base has been a continual embarrassment to the government, reports DUNCAN CAMPBELL — who, eight years ago, with Crispin Aubrey conducted an unpublished interview with a former Corporal John Berry from the base. In the consequent ABC (Aubrey, Berry and Campbell) Official Secrets Act trial, he became the first person to be taken to the Old Bailey accused (and acquitted) of spying on the Army's 9 Signal Regiment. ***Research by Patrick Forbes***

EXCEPTIONAL SECRECY always surrounds 'sigint' activities. All staff have to be specially vetted and 'indoctrinated' before being allowed to handle 'special intelligence'.

This 'indoctrination' stresses that the need for total secrecy about sigint 'never ceases'. But the information involved in sigint in fact ranges from inconsequential records of radio signals which anyone can receive to the fruits of codebreaking, say, the diplomatic cyphers of a country like France or Italy. The prosecution in the case that collapsed this week failed to point out that, even if the alleged losses of documents in Cyprus had been proved, they would have been low level, unanalysed 'intercepts' of little or no security significance.

Sigint 'tasks' are always conducted in isolated compartments. Those involved are forbidden to discuss their work even with 'cleared' colleagues not engaged on the same task. Junior operatives, such as the seven defendants, with no access to analysis or to top-level codebreaking information have little capacity to damage national security, even if they wish to. Nothing like the havoc wreaked by Geoffrey Prime, the proven Soviet spy recently uncovered inside GCHQ itself, was remotely possible.

Yet the opposite impression was deliberately created by the prosecution, who at the start of the case referred to 'incalculable' damage, and by the fact that most of the trial was conducted *in camera*.

The prosecution also skated over the fact that 9 Signal Regiment's main intelligence targets are not the supposedly hostile Soviet Union and its allies, but neutral countries and even NATO allies. The 'targetting' of NATO allies, like Turkey, was explained during the ABC trial by a former 9 Signal Regiment commanding officer, Colonel Hugh Johnstone: 'Friends don't always stay the same. . .There's a perfectly legitimate reason for the British to be extremely concerned in what is happening. [We] try to stay one jump ahead of the game'. But, he said, if the Russians found out that we were intercepting Turkish national military communications and could understand what was said it would be 'disruptive . . . the Turks are our allies in NATO and one of the main bastions of the southern flank' he said. It would cause a 'variety of altercations' for Britain to be caught spying on them.

It was claimed by the prosecution in the ABC case that the disclosures by former 9 Signal Regiment intelligence analyst John Berry, if true, revealed 'the fact that [intercepting the Turkish Navy] was one of our tasks and that we were able to read traffic on Turkish naval nets'. In fact, the information Berry disclosed about Turkish naval moves to invade Cyprus had come from the *Daily Telegraph* — a striking reminder that what the Sigint community believes to be secret may not be secret at all.

FROM THE START of the case that ended this week, it *was* admitted that the prosecution could not corroborate their claim that documents had actually been leaked. Hundreds of Secret and Top Secret documents are created and destroyed every week in Sigint units. Keeping track of them all is so difficult that disappearances of Top Secret documents are more common at GCHQ stations than in any other government department. If the defendants 'confessed' that they had removed documents from the classified waste 'burn bags', there is no way that this claim could be physically proved — or disproved.

The prosecution claimed that over 2,000 Secret and Top Secret sigint documents had been taken from the Ayios Nikolaos base — implying that, by February 1983, the defendants were making off with an astonishing 20 secret documents every week. But, apart from three sheets of carbon paper, the Crown case was entirely based on alleged confessions.

Nor was the prosecution able to show that any leaked information had actually reached the Soviet Union or other potential enemy. The prosecution's claim was in fact based on a logical fallacy: the correct test for classifying a document as Top Secret is that, if it leaks, 'grave damage' to the national interest is likely. It does not follow, however, that grave damage *does* occur, if there is a leak, for many documents are grossly 'overclassified'.

A gigantic amount of information and paper is produced daily in sigint operations rooms — and every bit of it is highly classified, whatever its intrinsic importance. Everything — even pasted-up newspaper cuttings — is classified at

9 SIGNALS OFFICERS' MURKY PAST

THE CYPRUS trial hung entirely on accusations about the relationship on one defendant, Geoffrey Jones, with a Filipino singer and on whether he ever talked with her about his work.

Less than three years before, both the commanding officer and the senior NCO in 9 Signals Regiment — Lieutenant-Colonel Anthony Seward (below, going into his court-martial) and

PA

Regimental Sergeant Major Charles Gledhill — were caught in smuggling and theft rackets. Seward operated a profitable private hire and retail service dealing in British Army equipment and supplies, trading amongst others with the Turkish occupation forces in Cyprus — one of his intelligence targets.

Despite a GCHQ security rule, of which the prosecution frequently reminded the RAF trial jury, that any corruption or sexual 'unorthodoxy' is automatically a major security risk, the army went to considerable lengths to avoid court-martialling Colonel Seward and only did so after Chris Price MP protested about the injustice of court-martialling only the RSM who did his dirty work for him. Seward was subsequently convicted and jailed.

Seward's predecessor but one as Commanding Officer of 9 Signals Regiment, Colonel Hugh Johnstone, achieved notoriety in 1978 as the 'anonymous' witness — 'Colonel B' — in the ABC Official Secrets Act trial. In 1983, Seward's successor at Ayios Nikolaos, Lieutenant-Colonel Tony Boyle, was selected as the Army's nominee for Britain's first man in space. But his hopes of being an astronaut left orbit in June 1984, when sigint operators were sent to face trial at the Old Bailey. ●

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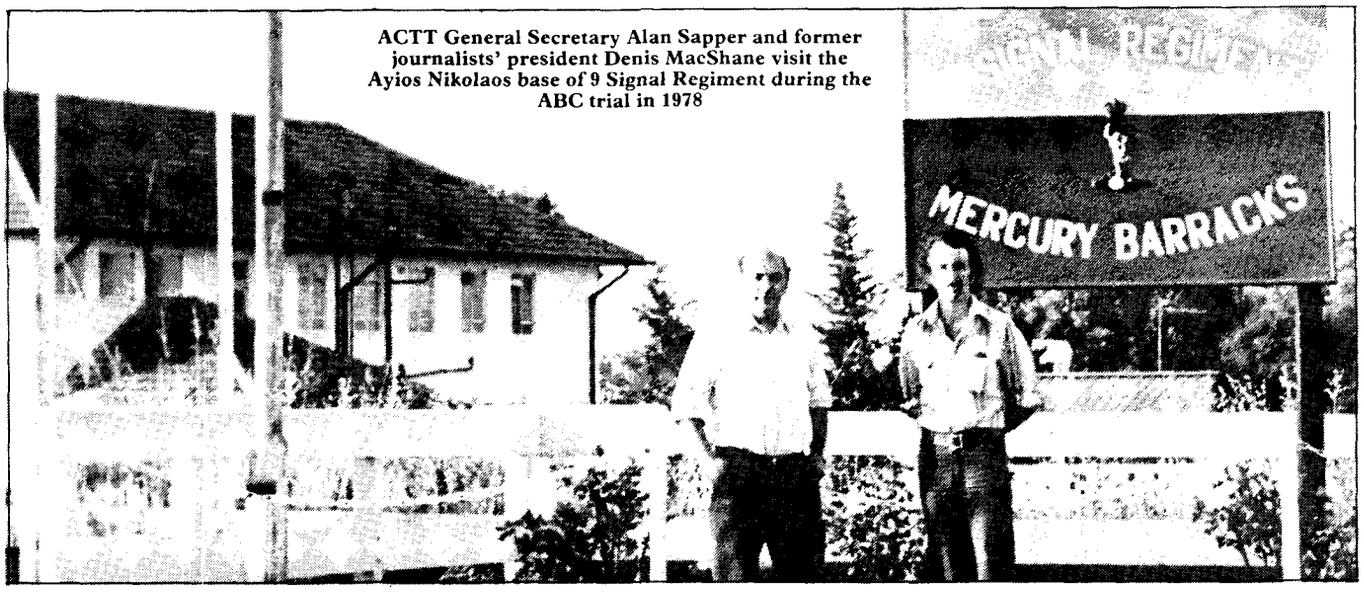
EAVESDROPPERS ON A DUSTY PLAIN



ACTT General Secretary Alan Sapper and former journalists' president Denis MacShane visit the Ayios Nikolaos base of 9 Signal Regiment during the ABC trial in 1978

THE ARMY'S 9th Signal Regiment is based at Ayios Nikolaos ('St Nicholas' in Greek), near Famagusta in Cyprus. 9 Signal Regiment is the Mediterranean Field Intercept Station for Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) in Cheltenham, Britain's largest intelligence agency.

Ayios Nikolaos is station number UKM257 in the Anglo-American network of monitoring stations, and is targetted against the communications of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern states, including the secret diplomatic and military communications of Libya, Egypt, and Iraq, as well as NATO allies Italy, Greece and Turkey. Other top targets are Saudi Arabia, the Lebanon, Syria, and naval and aircraft movements in the eastern Mediterranean, particularly by the Soviet Union. The results of these eavesdropping activities are not normally shared with NATO allies.

Some signals are also intercepted from Israel and Iran. Information is routinely exchanged with a network of nearby US Air Force and National Security Agency monitoring bases, principally Heraklion in Crete, San Vito dei Normanni near Brindisi in Italy, and Karamursel in Turkey. Only at the US network of monitoring bases in Turkey — including one secretly run jointly with the UK — is the main target the Soviet Union.

Electronic eavesdropping in the Middle East started during the First World War, for the business of monitoring radio signals began as soon as radio was invented. 9 Signals' predecessors in 1916 were equipped with crystal sets to intercept Turkish signals at Gallipoli and in the Dardanelles. The unit's first permanent base was in Sarafand, Palestine, in 1923, where it remained as the 2nd Special Wireless Regiment ('Special' meaning spying as opposed to communicating) for the next 24 years. After the end of the British mandate in Palestine in 1947, it moved to Ayios Nikolaos, a dusty plain four miles west of the eastern Cyprus port of Famagusta. It was soon joined by the RAF's ear on the Middle East, 33 Signals Unit from Habbiniyah in Iraq, which set up next door at Pergamos. The RAF and Army units were finally merged in the late 1970s.

The regiment is unique in the British Army. It is made up of Intelligence Corps personnel, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force analysts and radio operators, and civilian monitoring staff from GCHQ's 'Composite Signal Organisation'. The far better pay, conditions, and laxer discipline of the civilian staff of the Regiment are a constant source of friction between them and military personnel.

The unit is subdivided into three numbered squadrons. 1 Squadron provides the administration and maintenance of the base; 2 Squadron are the radio operators, who receive, and tape or transcribe radio signals. Theirs is a relatively unskilled craft compared to the personnel of 3 Squadron, who are intelligence analysts for sigint. Only in 3 squadron does the raw material intercepted begin to be transformed into something 'useful' — analysed and cross-referenced to other sources including CIA and secret service reports. Very little codebreaking can be done at the Cyprus base itself. Signals which require more than a few hours deciphering work are sent directly to GCHQ at Cheltenham, where the specialised resources of cryptographers and huge computers can be brought to bear.

The defendants in this case were all in 2 Squadron and, except for one clerk were all identified as Special Operator Telegraphists — in Sigint terms the lowest of the low, lacking even language skills to listen to and interpret spoken radio signals, let alone morse messages. They would not have knowledge of codebreaking or intelligence analysis. Nor would they know about British codes and cyphers, which would be handled separately in the Regiment's communications centre.

There has never been any secret in Cyprus about the activities of 9 Signal Regiment. The UK-Cyprus treaty which grants Britain the right to occupy its two Sovereign Base Areas in perpetuity even has a special clause requiring all Cypriot electrical equipment operated near Ayios Nikolaos or Pergamos to be specially 'suppressed' to avoid interference with sensitive listening equipment.

Spread across the road north and south of Ayios Nikolaos are a small forest of army high frequency direction finding and receiving aerials. Recently, satellite terminals, microwave dishes and a circular 'Pusher' direction finding aerial have been added to the monitoring equipment, making the station's function even more obvious. But the array of domes pictured in most reports about the spy case are a wholly unconnected installation — the RAF's air defence radar station on Mount Olympus. However, a 9 Signals regiment substation near Kakopetria in the Troodos mountains, does operate electronic intelligence ('elint') receivers. ●

least as SECRET — simply because of where it is being handled. A jotting sheet by a radio operator will often be classified not merely TOP SECRET, but a special codeword, UMBRA, is added to denote that the paper contains specially sensitive sigint data. This is the case even if radio amateurs in the region are receiving and monitoring the same signals.

Inside a sigint base, according to GCHQ security regulations (themselves graded CONFIDENTIAL, meaning that any disclosure is supposed to be 'prejudicial to the national interest'), 'all waste paper is to be treated as classified waste'. So much paper is produced that the necessary security protection cannot be afforded. Tons of paper are marked to be burned every month in the incinerator at the back of the operations block of 9 Signals Regiment. This incinerator's reliability over the years has been poor and more than one former sigint employee can recall occasions on which it failed — belching aloft a stream of top secret paper, most of it later retrieved as it blew against the perimeter fences of the Cyprus base.

Since 1978, former GCHQ signals intelligence supervisor Jock Kane has been urging the government to look into numerous — and real — losses of documents by GCHQ spy bases from Hong Kong to Scotland. Not only has his campaign been ignored, but the government recently obtained a court injunction to prevent him publishing a book detailing the security lapses.

When in 1980, following Kane's information, the *New Statesman* assembled a dossier showing corruption by GCHQ and

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Defence Ministry employees in Hong Kong, government law officers contrived to send the evidence to Hong Kong where they knew it would not be used for a prosecution.

THE CYPRUS case confirms beyond doubt the prurient interest of RAF inquisitors in the sexual activities of the junior ranks. This case mirrors another charge against an airman in Cyprus, which also ended in an acquittal at the Old Bailey last year.

The *New Statesman* has obtained separate evidence about the apparent priorities of RAF investigators. Some members of the RAF Provost and Security Service have themselves broken the Official Secrets Act, by removing and planning to leak information about prominent civilians gleaned during witchhunts against homosexual activities, such as those alleged in this week's case.

One RAF investigator planned to sell the lengthy results of his work to the press. An investigation conducted by the RAF Security Services at a base near Oxford began when it was discovered that a gay serviceman had placed a contact advertisement in *Gay News*. An RAF sergeant stole the man's private correspondence in order to 'discover' it at a suitable later date as 'evidence'. A 900 page dossier, which we have seen, was then compiled about a network of civilian gay men, whose affairs were none of their business. Although the serviceman concerned was later discharged, no offences were alleged or prosecuted.

When the leading RAF investigator in this case left the air force, he took with him a copy of the dossier, with the intention of selling its contents to either British or German newspapers. The report included love letters from a senior figure in the arts world, recently honoured, and also referred, incidentally, to a (non-gay) senior minister in the last Labour government.

Hypocrisy was evident throughout the Crown's case. It was, the prosecutor said, 'utterly frowned on. . .to form close liaisons with foreign nationals'. He then went on to give a lurid account of the young men's service life in Cyprus, as 'uncovered' by the RAF interrogators — including allegations of homosexual orgies, semen-drenched bisexual 'splash parties', energetic mutual buggery, all warmed in the happy haze of cannabis smoke and lubricated by the proceeds of the haemorrhage of those thousands of Secret and Top Secret documents.

The prosecution's account of 'splash parties' was evidently as far out as its allegations of spying. The defendants — and one of their wives and two Filipino women also named in the 'confessions' — all completely denied that the sexual encounters ever took place.

In any case it is simply not true to represent liaisons with foreign women and single-sex sexual horseplay as being anything other than the norm for young servicemen abroad. The official regimental magazine of the Royal Signals, *Wire*, has for decades published monthly accounts of such events in the life at 9 Signals Regiment and other units. Such reports have detailed encounters with Swedish women on Famagusta beach; another signals unit reported its 'Roman Orgy' pyjama party, featuring the 'B Troop Belly Dancers' and the 'MT Drag Queen' (all men) — and all under the headline 'Moments grave and gay'. □

SHAKE-UP FOR THE LEFT KALEIDOSCOPE

Neil Kinnock soared in the polls after denouncing Militant's role in Liverpool — and suddenly 'realignment of the Left' has moved from the drawing board to the assembly line. JOHN RENTOUL charts what's going on

UNTIL NEIL KINNOCK reached the word 'taxis' in his speech at the Labour Party's Bournemouth conference, the Realignment of the Left had been a comfortable process existing mainly in the minds of theoreticians of the 'soft Left' Labour Co-ordinating Committee.

Since 3.27 pm on 1 October 1985, when Kinnock launched his frontal attack on Liverpool's Militant leadership, there has been a desperate effort among commentators to convince us that the leader is winning his fight to isolate the 'hard Left'. The sting in the tail of Neil Kinnock's speech, they say, made leftwingers re-examine their position and so forced the pace of the Realignment.

This Realignment, so the theory goes, involves leading figures on the left of the party — and a new intake of activists at the grassroots — rallying round Neil Kinnock. They know he's not supported the miners much and seems unimaginatively law-abiding when it comes to ratecapping, but he's still 'the most left-wing leader we've ever had' (Ken Livingstone), and, what's more, he's the only one the party's got.

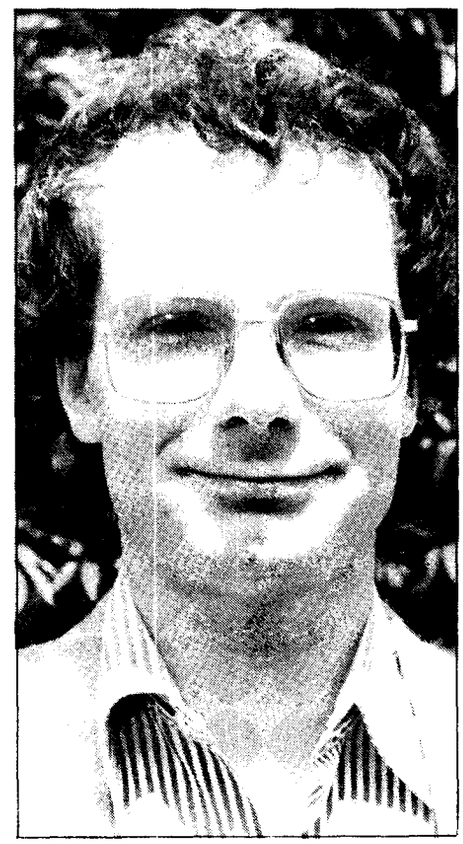
But 'realignment by defection' is not of course how the realigners themselves see the process. For people like Sheffield council leader David Blunkett, it isn't a process of people leaving 'hard Left' groups and joining 'soft Left' ones. It's a question of finding common ground on the Left — or across the party as a whole; being less hung up on having the 'right' policies, more concerned about spreading 'socialist values'.

But is a Realignment *really* taking place? There are five power bases where it could be happening: the National Executive Committee (NEC), the Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP), the constituency parties, Labour local councils and the trade unions. So what is the evidence?

National executive There are now 11 members of the NEC who would vote with Neil Kinnock against either the nine rightwingers *or* the eight 'hard' leftwingers. The new NEC elected at Bournemouth was described at the time as 'unchanged', with a Kinnock (i.e. rightwing) gain in the trade union section offset by a 'hard left' gain in the women's division. What actually happened was more complex: the Right lost two places (Conference chair Alan Hadden of the boilermakers' union, who resigned, and Anne Davis, the only non-MP in the women's division), while the 'soft Left' gained one in the trade union section — and Margaret Beckett MP got in. She was on the left slate, but if you look at what's happening among MPs, she turns out to be distancing herself from some of the 'hard Left's' initiatives.

PLP October's two desertions from the 'hard left' Campaign Group of MPs brought into the open the group's internal tensions. Derek Fatchett and Kevin Barron (MPs for Leeds Central and Rother Valley respectively), in a resignation statement in *Tribune*, say: 'The group too often displays an unpleasant degree of authoritarianism.' And Barron added: 'It appears to be more of an anti-leadership group than ever before.' This week he was rewarded by being made Kinnock's parliamentary secretary.

SOME OF THE GROUP'S remaining 34 MPs are also unhappy with its political direction. In September, six of them didn't put their names to a discussion document on economic policy called *A Million Jobs a Year*. The pamphlet, by Marxist Oxford economist



UPP

Currently bridge-building between Tribune and Campaign — Chris Smith MP

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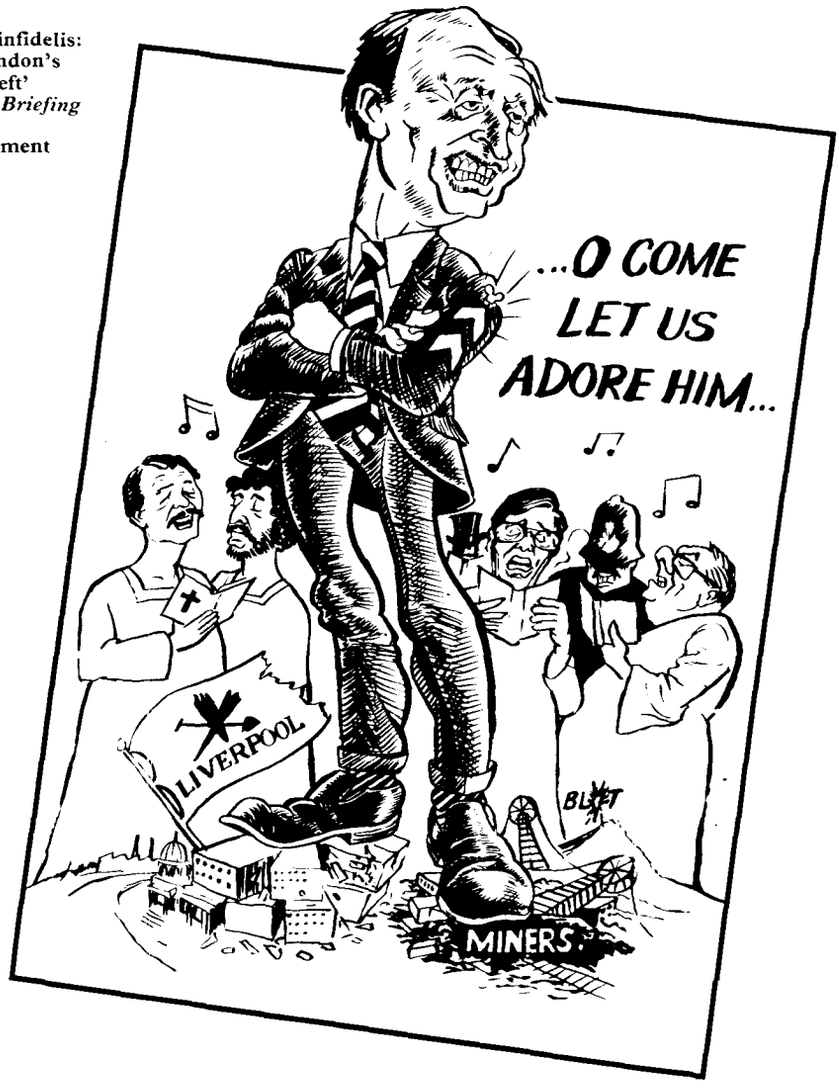
Adeste infidelis: how London's 'hard Left' *Labour Briefing* sees the Realignment



Andrew Glyn, argues that 'There Is No Alternative' to full state planning. One of the six, Mark Fisher (MP for Stoke on Trent), is like Fatchett and Barron a 'new boy' elected in 1983, but he does not believe (yet) that it is 'right to abandon the Campaign Group to sectarianism', and is committed to fighting in the group for a broader-based approach. The six dissenters also include Margaret Beckett (hence the significance of her election to the NEC), Stuart Holland, Jo Richardson and Michael Meacher.

Meacher, of course, met his Realignment before Kinnock's famous 'Tuesday speech'. The Sunday before the Bournemouth conference he voted with the party leader on the national executive to give him a 15-14 majority against retrospective reimbursement of the National Union of Mineworkers. Twenty-seven constituency delegates protested by breaking their mandate and not voting, at the last minute, for him in the NEC elections.

His subsequent treatment as a class traitor by other members of the Campaign Group was one of the reasons Fatchett and Barron gave for their resignation. Meacher himself is in an awkward position, because he lacks political agility. He is the Campaign Group's only representative in the Shadow Cabinet but clearly feels his first loyalty is to the Shadow Prime Minister.

So is there a Realignment behind the 'centre-left' Tribune Group of 58 MPs? For many years Tribune membership has been a token badge and the group hasn't operated as a coherent faction. But Tribune's new secretary, Chris Smith MP, has organised the group more effectively and even succeeded in negotiating the joint 'slate' with the Campaign Group for this week's Shadow Cabinet elections.

When it comes to finding common ground on the Left, the important group of MPs are the 12 who are members of both Tribune and Campaign. They include five of those who wouldn't put their name to Glyn's state planning document: Beckett, Fisher, Holland, Meacher and Richardson. But the 'common ground' strategy looks more and more unworkable, and it is understood that there will be further resignations from the Campaign Group before the end of the year.

'Kinnock's the most left-wing leader we've ever had, and what's more he's the only one the party's got'

Between them Tribune and Campaign have 83 of the 208 Labour MPs. Adding 'non-aligned' leftwingers, such as Fatchett and Barron, the 'Left' has a nominal majority in the PLP — yet it can only muster 5 of the 15-member elected Shadow Cabinet. This is because many Tribune members (who still include Neil Kinnock) vote for existing frontbenchers who are good at their job rather than for the slate (which still includes Tony Benn).

Constituency Labour Parties It may be too early to say, but the reaction to Kinnock's speech has not been as unfavourable as might be expected. Several well-known 'hard left' parties (such as Islington South and Peckham in London) actually saw motions of censure defeated at management committee meetings. The organised hard Left didn't circulate model resolutions, and in many cases condemnations of Kinnock were only carried on the back of motions supporting Liverpool council.

But although they aren't prepared to pass 'damaging' anti-Kinnock motions, the response of many activists in London was one of dismay. 'Some of us are wondering what we want the power for.' 'I don't believe you should knock the few people who are prepared to oppose the government actively'. 'But it is a real dilemma,' concluded another, 'when you see him shooting up in the opinion polls.'

Labour councils This year's darling at Conference was David Blunkett, leader of Sheffield Council, who won first place in the constituency parties' poll for the national executive, toppling Tony Benn for the first time in 11 years (Foot, M., topped the poll in 1973). And his 'Will you do that, Derek?' tapped Conference's desire for unity.

HE WAS A PRIME MOVER behind the unions' search for a solution to Liverpool's problems. 'Militant' is not synonymous with 'Liverpool', he said. Which is true, but unfortunately doesn't make building bridges with Kinnock's 'stay within the law' position any easier. The non-Militant councillors in Liverpool are even more confrontation-seeking than Derek Hatton: Tony Byrne, the chair of finance, is a former Jesuit and housing charity activist with a mission simply to build houses — or be martyred in the attempt.

Outside Liverpool, Blunkett will also be playing a role in the wider battle against ratecapping and grant cuts — although Sheffield itself has been taken off the rate-cap hit list, he is chair of the Labour Party's Local Government Committee. Next year the 'hard left' tactic of not setting a rate is a non-starter. Only Liverpool and Lambeth held out to the point of breaking the law this year, and Lambeth is likely to fall to the Liberals next May, if not before. (Labour has a majority of one and has lost several recent by-elections.)

The London Labour Party, for example, decided a flexible strategy of 'financial defiance' at a special meeting two weeks ago. At least 9 of the 12 ratecapped Labour councils are confident that whatever the government does, they can find ways to maintain jobs and services until the next general election.

The London meeting was also important because the London executive committee's view was carried throughout. Crucial in carrying the vote were the transport workers' union and NUPE. In the past few years the 'hard Left' has often narrowly carried votes in London Labour Party conferences, but the best they could manage this time was to lose an amendment 'reaffirming the policy of

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confronting and challenging Tory laws' by 152,000 to 359,500.

Trade unions At Bournemouth, the support of the Transport and General Workers Union, with 17 per cent of the vote at Labour conference, ensured the passing of the NUM resolution, including the clause on reimbursement that Kinnock didn't like.

But TGWU leader Ron Todd has since dashed hard left hopes by making it clear that his union would have nothing to do with those who would oppose Kinnock on a range of other issues. The NUM vote at Bournemouth was the last symbolic gesture of solidarity with the striking miners. Reimbursement will not be an issue next year — but the potentially very damaging split in Nottinghamshire will be. And on that front Arthur Scargill's defeat on the NUM executive this week is good news. Scargill wants the expulsion from the Labour Party of supporters of the breakaway Union of Democratic Mineworkers, but more conciliatory voices may now prevail on the NUM executive.

FOR ALL THE HYPE, there seem to have been real changes on the Labour Left, especially on the NEC and among councillors.

For two years the miners (since the appointment of Ian MacGregor to the Coal Board in September 1983) and Liverpool (since Labour won a big majority on the council in May 1984) have dominated the ideology of the Labour Party. That domination is now over.

The question is what Neil Kinnock will do with his new freedom. Only once on the NEC has he actually used his majority *against the Right* — to secure Larry Whitty's appointment as general secretary. In the NEC vote on reimbursement of the NUM, for example, he was siding with the Right and splitting the 'soft Left'.

The problem for the soft Left is how to make their support for Kinnock a two-way process. Council leaders like Blunkett and Livingstone have shown that imaginative radical politics can win popular support — but can they infuse the leader with any of that imagination? □

Joining the chorus of advice offered to Prince Charles, Mr Harold Brooks-Baker, editor of Burke's Peerage, yesterday recommended creation of black peers and employment of black butlers to cure society's ills. 'There's no better way of absorbing the traditions and culture of a people than by working in its family homes,' he said, adding that at least 20,000 families would find they could afford servants. — the *Guardian* (Keith Hotten)

Public schoolboys display solidarity even in adversity it seems. Justin Frewen, the bald Old Etonian City entrepreneur jailed for two years in June, has, I hear, formed an exclusive 'dining club' in Wandsworth prison. Apparently he, along with several others from distinguished 'Alma Maters', sit apart from other inmates at meals to discuss old times and play the occasional hand of bridge. — *Daily Telegraph* (Mr J. T. Hart)

YOU ARE ALL INVITED TO COME TO A PARTY

It may not be hip to be a Tory, but the Conservatives are trying just as hard as the other parties to get the younger voter, reports ADAM LEBOR

EVEN DAVID OWEN'S best friends wouldn't describe him as modest. But it still came as a surprise when he told Susanna Voyle, ex-editor of the Bristol student newspaper *Bacus:* 'I don't see why I should be giving interviews to small, unimportant newspapers'. He gave the interview, but her successor would have a much pleasanter reception.

Politicians know that the 5,000,000 18 to 24 year olds on the electoral register by 1988 could hold the key to 10 Downing St. Prompted in part by International Youth Year, the parties are all either running or planning campaigns aimed at winning young people's allegiance. Even the freshly renamed Green Party set up a youth section in March.

Until 1979 Labour could be confident of winning more votes from the under-25s than any other party. But more (42 per cent) voted Conservative in that year than Labour (41 per cent). The trend continued in 1983 with 42 per cent voting Conservative, 33 per cent Labour and 23 per cent Alliance. However, the youth vote is more volatile than that of the population as a whole and by August 1984 MORI's opinion polls suggested a dramatic reversal: support for Labour jumped to 48 per cent while support for the Conservatives fell to 31 per cent.

A month later, in September, Labour's support among young people fell by over a quarter to 34 per cent, before rising in April 1985 to 52 per cent.

In spite of 'that video', the T-shirts, Billy Bragg's 'Jobs For Youth' tour (with Labour MPs as support) and the launch of the party's 'Charter For Young People', Labour's support among the young has levelled out over the last few months in the low 40s. MORI's latest figures give Labour 42 per cent, the Conservatives 24 per cent and the Alliance 32 per cent. There's no doubt that young people see Neil Kinnock as more attractive than Michael Foot or Jim Callaghan but it's too early to judge the full effect of Labour's new image-making strategy.

For years Labour has had an ambivalent attitude to young people. It wants their votes and young members, but because the Young Socialists are controlled by Militant they have so far been ignored as a means of attracting young activists. Labour didn't bother to mention its own youth section during its last party political broadcast, aimed at young people. It was voiced over by Billy Bragg, the only speaker under 30 at the launch of the party's youth charter in June.

But these factional differences have now been shoved aside and Labour is presenting a united front for its new youth campaign. Red Wedge, named after a Soviet revolutionary painting, wants more than just votes. It aims to marry music, fashion, style and drama with the labour movement and develop what Andy Bevan, Labour's National Youth Officer, calls 'a politicised youth culture'.

Musicians, including Paul Weller and Billy Bragg, activists such as Annajoy David of Youth CND, journalists such as Neil Spencer, ex-editor of *New Musical Express*, and Simon Pell of 'Arts For Labour' are all working on the campaign.

Since Tracey Ullman first frolicked across the television screen with Neil Kinnock in tow the Labour party has been criticised for trying to 'Americanise' politics by using glamorous stars to try to attract votes.

Ian Pye, editor of *New Musical Express*, thinks the new alliance between pop and politics is a positive trend. 'It brings more young people into the political arena and the pop stars involved, such as Billy Bragg and Paul Weller, aren't being used. They understand their relationship with the Labour Party and they aren't afraid to criticise it.'

SIMILAR attempts by the SDP to recruit famous faces have badly floundered. Nick Alexander, Managing Director of Games at Virgin Records, is helping the party with its youth campaign but his first venture, an advertisement in *Music Week*, the industry's trade paper, appealing for pop stars to join up with the mould breakers, drew such a poor response that the idea was abandoned.

Instead the SDP has launched 'YouthBlitz' to win young people's support and votes, organised along classic populist and rather macho lines. 'Have you got the guts to take on the SDP challenge?' blares the campaign literature which promises that the SDP will 'bust open the power club'.

The theme of 'having enough guts' — to scrap Trident, share Britain's wealth with the Third World and create a classless and more equal society — runs right through 'YouthBlitz'. But Danny Finklestein, chair of the Young Social Democrats, is confident that the campaign's combination of college and public meetings, local campaigns and national events and 'surprise appearances' will succeed. 'We think it's brash rather than macho,' he said. 'Young women helped set it up and it's also aimed at young women. The SDP's less macho than the labour movement.'

FELIX DODDS, chair of the Young Liberals,

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Paul Mattsson

Billy Bragg and Paul Weller doing their bit for a 'politicised youth culture' at last weekend's CND demo

takes a wry view of the SDP's 'YouthBlitz'. 'It's amusing, but we feel success comes from work rather than slogans.' The Young Liberals have described their politics as a 'rich cocktail of anarchism and socialism with a strong green strand' and Felix admits that they are 'politically poles apart from the SDP'.

The Liberals have been the most active party on youth issues during International Youth Year. Liberal MPs have introduced five bills on youth issues in parliament, including a comprehensive youth charter. Chief Whip David Alton, MP for Mossley Hill, was one of the driving forces behind Liberal Youth Day in Parliament this May. Hundreds of young people came to the House of Commons to lobby MPs, quiz Liberal MPs and Peers on youth issues and attend seminars. Several MPs (not necessarily Liberal ones) won't be pleased to learn that Liberal Youth Day is to become an annual fixture.

Young Liberals have also been active in several local International Youth Year groups.

ONLY THE Conservatives, of the four big parties, have no policy document on youth and they don't plan to publish one in the future. 'We don't cater for sectional interests groups,' said Marc MacGregor of the Federation of Conservative Students.

But youthful Tories will find it hard to unite in a common campaign. The Young Conservatives are as wet as a British summer, whereas the rival FCS is almost dehydrated. And it isn't easy enlisting pop stars and other young trendies. 'The music and youth culture establishment is the reverse of society's as a whole,' admits MacGregor. One man at least is prepared to stand up and be counted. FCS proudly presented Miles Copeland, the American manager of the Police to a lunch-time meeting at the Conservatives' Blackpool conference.

The Tories aren't sitting back and letting the opposition grab the youth vote. FCS is pushing for a series of adverts in the youth and music press extolling the virtues of the free market economy and pointing out the lack of pop stars and youth culture behind the Iron Curtain. Other tactics include Rambo T-shirts claiming he would join FCS and a badge, sanctioned by Central Office, proclaiming 'Tories Do It With A Woman On Top'. Bizarre as they are, all these gimmicks and campaigns confront one simple obstacle: among the young it's just not hip to be a Tory.

And many young people aren't interested in any sort of party politics. Compared with the population as a whole, almost twice as many 18-24 year olds (13 per cent) tell opinion pollsters they would not vote. The fastest-growing youth organisation in Britain is Youth CND, according to national organiser Andrew Chapman. The animal rights movement also attracts young activists. The British Union For The Abolition of Vivisection has about 17,000 members, many young and 'disillusioned with three-party politics and all the slagging off involved,' according to a spokesperson. Animal Aid and the Animal Liberation Front also have strong youth involvement.

Image and trend may be more important to young people, but in the end most 18 to 24 year olds, like most of the population, vote for the party they think will best run the country, not the one with the trendiest T-shirts or most support from pop stars. □

Adam LeBor is editor of Spark, *the International Youth Year (England) magazine; the views expressed here are his own.*

INJUSTICE

PUB BOMB EVIDENCE COLLAPSES

Forensic evidence that convicting six Irishmen of murder in 1974 has been shown to be worthless they still claim that their confessions were beaten out of them. CHRIS MULLIN reviews the case of the 'victims of circumstance'

MONDAY NIGHT'S *World in Action* will almost certainly lead to the re-opening of the case against the six Irishmen convicted of the Birmingham pub bombings.

Among those calling for the case to be re-opened are Tory MP Sir John Farr and Roy Jenkins, who was Home Secretary at the time of the bombings. Jenkins told *World in Action*: 'The new evidence I have seen would be sufficient to create in my mind what is sometimes called a lurking doubt as to whether the convictions in these cases are safe'.

Sir John Farr said: 'In the interests of justice a new trial should take place for the Birmingham pub bombers as soon as possible'.

The crime of which the six men were convicted was the biggest murder in British history. On the evening of 22 November 1974, bombs exploded in two Birmingham pubs,

Mugshots of the accused show clear evidence of severe beatings. Paddy Hill (left) and Hugh Callaghan

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killing 21 people and injuring 160 others. The bombers had phoned through a warning, but it was too late and too imprecise to enable police to evacuate the pubs.

The bombings marked the climax of an 18 months' IRA bombing campaign in the West Midlands and the police were under tremendous pressure to get results. Within hours of the explosions five Irishmen had been arrested as they were about to board the night ferry from Heysham to Belfast. The men were Paddy Hill, Gerry Hunter, Richard McIlkenny, Billy Power and Johnny Walker. They had all boarded a train that left Birmingham's New Street Station twenty minutes before the first explosions. A sixth man, Hugh Callaghan, was arrested at home in Birmingham next day.

After three days in the custody of West Midlands detectives, four of the men — McIlkenny, Power, Walker and Callaghan — signed confessions. Their case was not helped by the discovery that the five arrested at Heysham had been on their way to the funeral of James McDade, an IRA man who had blown himself up the previous week while planting a bomb outside Coventry telephone exchange. McDade had been a childhood friend of three of the men.

The trial opened in June 1975. It was held in

Johnny Walker (left) and McIlkenny

Lancaster because the atmosphere in Birmingham was such that there was no hope of finding an unbiased jury. Mr Justice Bridge presided.

The case against the six men consisted of the four confessions; positive forensic tests that showed that Hill, Power and possibly Walker had recently handled explosives; and a good deal of circumstantial evidence. They had been in the wrong place at the wrong time and they knew a lot of the wrong people.

There were some notable holes in the prosecution case. The confessions were riddled with inconsistencies. They all, for example, said that the bombs had been contained in plastic bags, whereas forensic evidence later showed that the bombs must have been in holdalls or briefcases.

The confessions also contradicted one another as to who had placed which bombs in which pubs and as to how many bombs there had been. Billy Power confessed to bombing one of the pubs, the 'Mulberry Bush', on his own. Hugh Callaghan's confession says that he and Gerry Hunter bombed the 'Mulberry Bush' and makes no mention of Power. Richard McIlkenny's confession says he bombed the other pub, the 'Tavern in the Town', together with Paddy Hill. Yet in his confession Johnny Walker says that he and Gerry Hunter bombed the Tavern — which puts Hunter in two places at the same time.

A search of the men's homes failed to unearth any trace of explosives or bomb-making equipment and no serious explanation was offered as to where they obtained the bombs they allegedly planted. Forensic tests on the clothes they were wearing at the time of their arrest proved negative and the police were unable to find a single witness who had seen any of the men in either of the pubs. Nor did anyone come forward to say they had seen the men on New Street station with the plastic bags in which the bombs were allegedly contained. ▷

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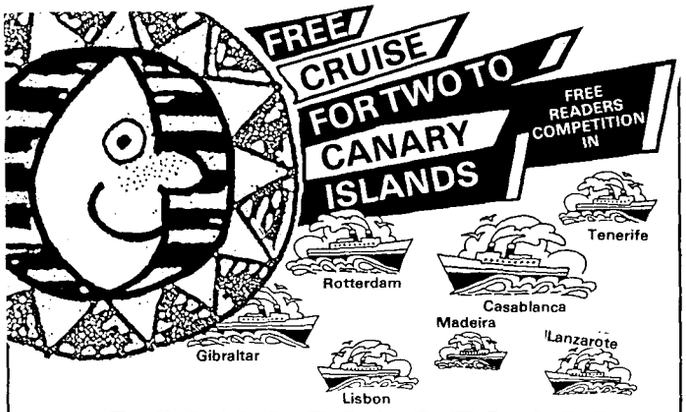

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THE IMPOSSIBILITIES OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY (142pp paper £1) is essential reading for the Party Conference season. The main themes are that in the political game nothing changes other than the names of the actors; and that 'a wise man neither lets himself be governed nor seeks to govern others'.

*

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The circumstantial evidence against them was, however, in the climate of the times, very damaging. All the men drank in pubs and clubs frequented by known members of the IRA and Sinn Fein. Three of them — Hill, Hunter and Walker — had four months earlier taken part in a Sinn Fein organised trip to the annual Wolfe Tone commemoration at Bodenstown in the Irish Republic. Walker, McIlkenny and Hill were well known for organising raffles and totes for dependants of internees.

Workmates of McIlkenny and Walker testified that the two men appeared to condone earlier IRA bombings in Birmingham. One, Thomas Watt, even alleged that Walker had warned him in advance of the pub bombings. Watt, however, did not make a good witness and his credibility was further undermined by the revelation that, on the night of the bombings, he had been playing host to Kenneth Littlejohn. Littlejohn was on the run from prison in Ireland where he was serving a sentence for armed robberies which he claimed to have committed while infiltrating the IRA for British intelligence.

BY ITSELF, however, the circumstantial evidence could not have secured convictions. Mr Justice Bridge made this clear in his summing up. The confessions and the forensic evidence were, he said, the two 'absolutely critical' chapters of the case against the men.

The men said then — and they say now — that the confessions were beaten out of them. They gave a graphic account of their three days and two nights in the hands of West Midlands detectives. The beatings they allege go far beyond the nowadays common allegations of violence in police custody. They include allegations of systematic torture, of mock executions in which guns containing blanks were fired at point blank range.

The first civilians to see the men as they emerged from police custody were the two solicitors who happened to be on duty when the men were produced in court — Anthony Curtis and Ian Gold. Gold and Curtis later testified that on that first visit to the cells below the court no less than four of the men had claimed to have been beaten in police custody. Walker had a black eye and four of the others attempted to draw attention to injuries on their bodies.

Both solicitors appear to have been more concerned with filling in the men's legal aid applications and, beyond promising to get a doctor later, neither at that stage took much interest in the alleged injuries. When the men appeared in court an hour later, neither solicitor attempted to place on record the very serious allegations that their clients had attempted to communicate to them.

By the time Curtis and Gold found doctors willing to examine the men, it was too late. On arrival at Winson Green prison the men had been severely beaten. So much so that when they next appeared on remand their injuries could not be overlooked. By this time, however, it was no longer easily possible to determine which injuries, if any, had been inflicted in police custody and which had been inflicted on arrival at the prison.

An inquiry was ordered and in due course fourteen prison warders went on trial charged with inflicting the beatings. They were all acquitted. How precisely the men came by their injuries has never definitively been established.

Gerry Hunter (left) and Billy Power

At the trial of the six Irishmen more than 20 policemen, ranging in rank from Detective Constable to Assistant Chief Constable, testified that to the best of their knowledge no one had laid a finger on any of the men during their three days in police custody. Walker's black eye was said to have been caused when he had banged his head while getting into a police car. The most rigorous cross-examination by defence counsel was unable to show up any but the most minor inconsistencies in the police testimony.

Other evidence has, however, since come to light. At the trial of the prison warders in 1976 the defence called David Paul, a distinguished forensic doctor who is now Coroner of the City of London. After studying mugshots of the men taken in police custody, Dr Paul testified that most of them showed signs of facial injuries which could only have been inflicted in police custody. Attempts to re-open the case against the six Irishmen on the basis of Dr Paul's evidence were, however, later rejected by Lord Denning. He ruled that, had the defence displayed proper diligence, Dr Paul's evidence could have been available at the original trial.

Charles Tremayne of *World in Action* and I have, however, discovered further evidence which was not available at the time. At their trial the prison warders all refused to testify. All except one had earlier given bland statements to the official inquiry in which they claimed not to have witnessed any violence when the men were received at Winson Green.

Unknown to the court, however, the prison officers had made detailed statements to their lawyers, describing the condition in which the men were delivered to the prison. One prison officer says that when the men stripped off in the prison reception he noticed that one had bruises all over his torso. 'They were all colours and most of them looked oldish . . . especially the yellow and purple ones.'

Another prison officer noted: 'I believe it was Walker who had a long and discoloured bruise from the waist up and across the front of his ribs. It was obviously two days old or thereabouts because it was yellow and discoloured'.

A third prison officer said: 'I would say their facial markings were recent but their bodily markings were at least one or more days old. These were consistent with a systematic beating below the neck while in police custody'.

BUT EVEN if the confessions are to be discounted, it is the forensic evidence which poses the biggest problem. How is it possible to explain the evidence of the Home Office expert, Dr Skuse, that two and possibly three of the men had been in contact with nitroglycerine?

Looked at carefully the forensic evidence was remarkably thin. The Greiss test that Dr Skuse had conducted while the men had been held in Morecambe police station should have been confirmed back at the laboratory by other more sensitive tests — Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectronomy (GCMS) and Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC). These tests, however, proved negative on all the samples except one taken from Paddy Hill and here it emerged that Skuse had taken only one reading from the oscilloscope instead of the three that most scientists regarded as necessary for a positive reading.

The defence forensic scientist, Dr Hugh Black, was a former Chief Inspector of Explosives. On paper his credentials were impressive but he lacked the practical experience of Dr Skuse and had not conducted experiments to support his case. He argued that, contrary to Dr Skuse's evidence, there *were* innocent substances that could produce a positive Greiss test. Nitrocellulose was one and it was a common feature of many substances with which the accused could have come into contact. Dr Black also said that Skuse had no basis for his certainty, given the failure of his confirmatory tests.

Mr Justice Bridge took an instant dislike to Dr Black and weighed in heavily on the side of the prosecution. At times he took over the cross-examination. In his summing up he comprehensively rubbished Dr Black's evidence.

Yet, as *World in Action* has proved, Dr Black was right all along. Granada commissioned two reputable forensic scientists, David Baldock and Dr Brian Caddy, to carry out Greiss tests in a range of household substances. Both obtained positive reactions for nitrocellulose.

Dr Caddy, who is head of the forensic science unit at the University of Strathclyde, also obtained positive results from products coated with nitrocellulose, including a picture postcard, a cigarette packet, a varnished wooden surface and two different makes of playing cards. Most significant of all, he obtained positive results from the hands of a man who had shuffled the cards. The convicted men had been playing cards on the train to Heysham.

I have interviewed each of the six men in prison. The story they tell today is essentially the one they told 11 years ago. Paddy Hill's legs still bear scars where, he says, a policeman stubbed a lighted cigarette. They still deny being members of either the IRA or Sinn Fein. Their names have never appeared on any IRA list of 'prisoners of war' held in British jails.

The men are presently held in four separate prisons. They have not all met together since their trial ten years ago. Most of them have not seen their trial papers for at least nine years. Yet their accounts of the interrogation, replete with circumstantial detail, are the same today as they have always been. For six ill-educated Irishmen to have sustained such a tissue of lies, if indeed they have, for eleven years without having the opportunity to compare notes would require a feat of intellect of which not even a High Court judge is capable. □

Chris Mullin's book on the Birmingham pub bombings will be published next year by Chatto and Windus.

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MEDIA

Do the glossies gloss over feminism?

ANNE KARPF

SEASON OF MISTS and women's magazine launches. As Susan Ardill and Sue O'Sullivan noted last week, three magazines launched in the space of seven days — are women's veins currently coursing with ink? Ardill and O'Sullivan suggested that the glossies, though their editorial contents may sometimes be disruptive or radical, appropriate the cultural space which feminism opened up 'minus most of the politics'.

But to see *Spare Rib, Women's Review* and the other newish feminist magazine *Everywoman* as fish, and the Murdoch-led *Elle* and the other glossy magazines as fowl, is to minimise the cross fertilisation. Certainly the British *Elle*, a quid a copy, is about style and lifestyle, the fashion glossy and pricey (a trench coat for £350 — just the thing for a miner's wife to step out in), with hints on how to aerobic your way to a smaller, 1980s-style bust. Hardly the stuff to wobble patriarchy or topple capitalism.

But at the *Spare Rib* relaunch, novelist Zöe Fairbairns recalled that in the far-off 1970s, people were chastising *Spare Rib* for being extreme, but now no women's magazine is untouched by the issues *Spare Rib* and the women's movement campaigned for.

It's true: most women's magazines now carry a health page, with information, advice, and campaign news. Even *Elle*'s first issue includes three articles with a whiff of feminist thinking, including a good one on the inadequacies of health education as against the social and economic causes of illness.

And many of the women interviewed in the feminist press — Alice Walker, Maya Angelou, Dora Russell, Angela Carter — are also now covered by the women's pages and women's magazines. They may be featured in a tokenist way, or as individuals abstracted from social movements, but at least they're there.

The influence hasn't only been one way. The feminist press is no longer proudly scruffy: the new *Spare Rib* brought in a designer from *The Face* to help them fashion a new image. There's also a tilt at the colour supps. in a 'light-hearted series of short articles called Feminist Bedrooms'. Light-hearted maybe, but also an acknowledgment that feminists don't live by struggle alone, and you don't have to be a yuppie to have upwardly mobile dreams.

But does any of this disprove the notion that the glossies are cultural feminism minus the politics? Certainly until recently many socialist and/or feminist women have been closet women's magazine readers, slipping their copy of *Cosmopolitan* beneath their *Guardian* or *Practical Computing*, convinced that they're ideologically incorrect escapism, trivia incarnate. They flog anorexic images of women, make us feel terrible about our spots or flagging libido; they merchandise capitalism, and make black women and lesbians invisible.

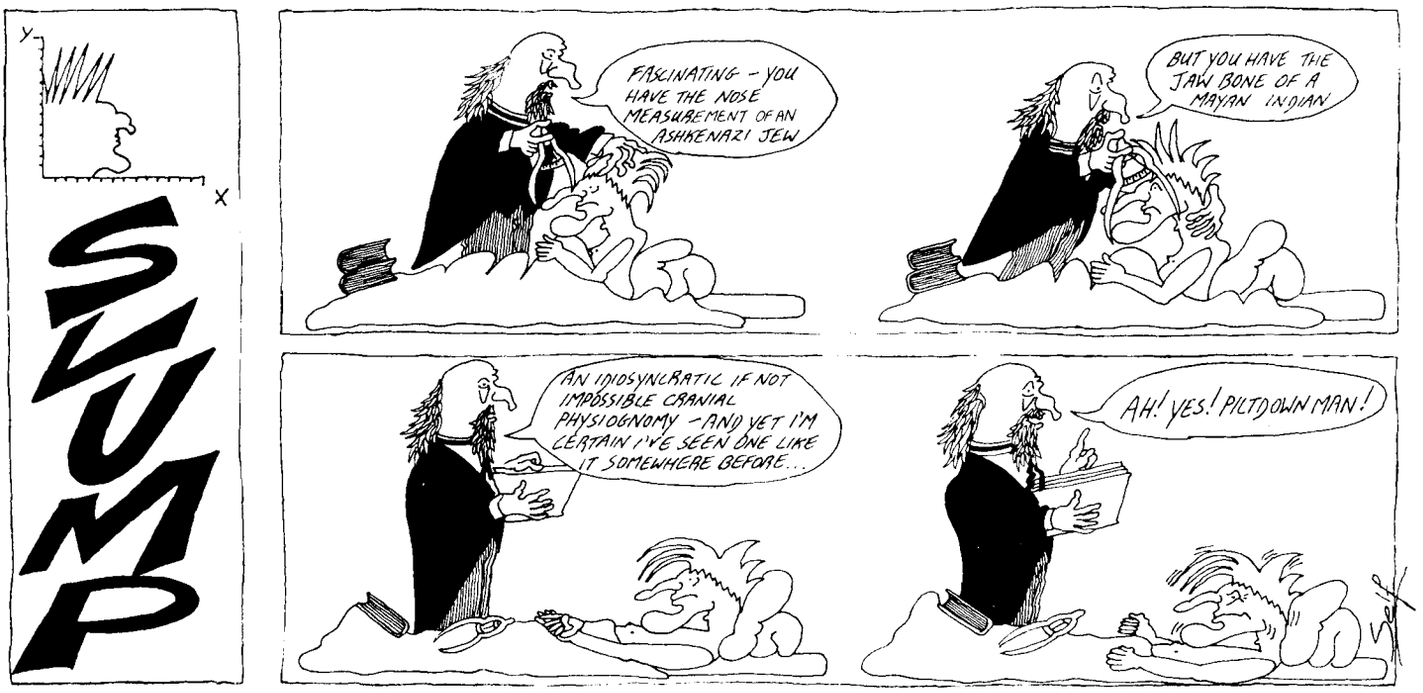
Or so goes the critique. And it's true, but it isn't the whole truth. Women's magazines aren't just propagators of the slick and the trivial, with the odd nod to the serious, and in accusing them of this, we risk seeing them through male eyes, and ignoring their contradictions.

Women's magazines also make space for subjects ignored by the male agenda of newspapers (or squeezed into the women's page). They take seriously relationships, emotions, vulnerabilities, and the minutiae of domestic life, unlike most 'quality' papers which think that important subjects take place in the House of Commons, the Stock Exchange, and the UN, and not the kitchen, the shops, or the nursery. (Though women's magazines also talk employment and welfare.) It's like the old joke about the husband who says, 'I take all the important decisions, like whether this country should go to war, and whether we should reform the tax system, and my wife takes all the minor ones, like where we should live, and where the children should go to school.'

IT'S TRUE that women's magazines eschew phrases and concepts like patriarchy, social relations, oppression. But they address women who say 'I'm not a feminist but . . .' and then speak feminist ideas.

It's also true that given their special and economic origins, as the product of capitalist corporations, glossy magazines aren't going to be really subversive, or commit themselves to a programme of political change. And yet, as a journalist who writes for women's magazines (I don't defend them because I write for them, I write for them because I can defend them), I know that I've been able to raise feminist issues of a kind in glossy magazines that I'm unable to anywhere else, including the *New Statesman*.

And so, while it's good that women's magazines are subjected to a rigorous critique, we shouldn't reproduce the idea that they're mainly about knitting patterns and having another orgasm. They also carry serious articles questioning oppressive orthodoxies, and campaign on women's behalf. The invisibility of women and the display of women's bodies in the national press is a fitter target for our anger. □


Y
X
SLUMP
FASCINATING - YOU HAVE THE NOSE MEASUREMENT OF AN ASHKENAZI JEW
BUT YOU HAVE THE JAW BONE OF A MAYAN INDIAN
AN IDIOSYNCRATIC IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE CRANIAL PHYSIOGNOMY - AND YET I'M CERTAIN I'VE SEEN ONE LIKE IT SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
AH! YES! PILTDOWN MAN!

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DIARY

With the baby teething, my own gums got inflamed: they did a sort of oral couvade and came out in sympathy. The dentist assured me that there was nothing a mouth rinse with warm salty water would not cure. At the same time the visit confirmed Joan Smith's recent complaint about the new dental charges (*NS* 16 August). It cost me £17.10 for a quick look and a couple of X-rays. My dentist is a very sympathetic Australian. He confirmed that the higher charges — 40 per cent of all costs — are oppressive. He and his colleagues may begin work on a tooth only to discover that a root-filling is needed. Whereupon they must warn the patient that an extra £20 or more will be charged, the alternative being to yank it out. I imagine young patients (who need the most fillings), who earn less that £75 a week, stuck there, mouths open, trying to calculate what will be left after the rent. A vision of Mrs Thatcher swims across the surgery spotlight. It says: 'The Health Service is safe in our hands'. But are our teeth safe in her hands? We'd rather have them in our mouths.

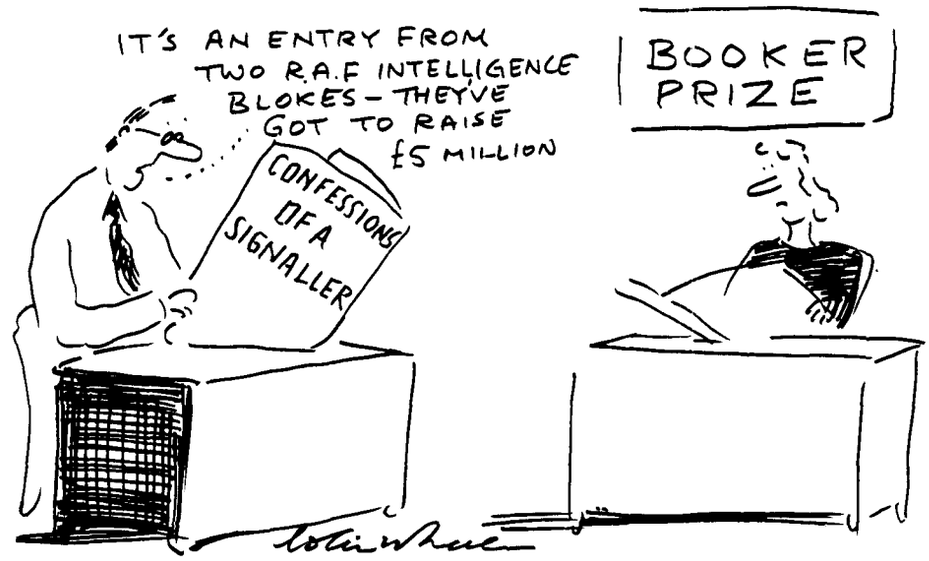
○

Where, indeed, they are bad enough. My dentist congratulated me for having children on regular fluoride. Britain, he said, 'is the last outpost of dental decay'. To combat this he insisted that I have a session with the hygienist, which was included in my £17.10. I learnt to my shame that I didn't hold my toothbrush at the correct 45 degree angle, and was finally convinced of the necessity of using dental floss. I knew that was coming. Just days before my appointment with the hygienist, Gary Trudeau put a wonderful series into his Doonsbury strip. Mark interviewed Dr Dan Asher, the 'Boswell' of the '60s generation. I don't know how Trudeau does it, certainly I do not mean to be fashionable, but in the cartoon the exchange went as follows:

> Doc, what's the ever-trendoid boomers up to these days? What's on their minds?
> Gum disease, Mark.
> Gum disease?
> You've got it, dude. Flossing is totally hot.

○

'Britain is the last outpost of dental decay'. The phrase has haunted me ever since like an allegory. The braying, confident accents of Britain come from mouths riddled with rotting teeth and poor gums. It's odd the way people here don't look the ruling class in the caries. The deaths and riots in Handsworth, Brixton and Tottenham, for example, have drawn just a few comparisons with football hooliganism and the miners' strike. There is no mention of the 'Falklands factor'. Indeed, commentary and analysis has concentrated rather frantically on policing and inner-city conditions as if to avoid the overall context. So I was struck by Bob Apple's adieu after eight years reporting on the UK for the *New York Times*. He, at least, lifted his head and saw the grimness of the total picture. But he also suckled from the old romance of Britain — that its faults, like its kindly side, come from lack of ambition and an unwillingness to work. He cited Ernest Bevin (whom he described as 'the greatest British foreign minister') with approval. Bevin once told the Americans: 'The trouble with my people is their poverty of desire'. Apple was echoed somewhat pathetically in the *Observer* by Robert Chesshyre who also endorsed Bevin. Now leave aside his thuggishness and the way he was a patsy for the Foreign Office, Bevin's patronising assessment of the British people was (and still is) quite wrong. Many wanted things to remain the same. Bevin especially, who was responsible for crippling imperial commitments all too enthusiastically embraced by those upon whom he looked down. As they were once rich and powerful — a great nation — their desire was too *much* rather than too little.



This desire is still all around us: the heavy plaque that leads to bleeding . . .

○

I've been attacked for my remarks about Neil Kinnock at the Labour Conference. I said it was a triumph, but for Labour's conservatism. 'If it was a triumph, why complain?' went one criticism. '*Was* it a triumph?' went another. It was, without a doubt. For a start leaders who succeed are those who despise their own parties. Kinnock demonstrated that he has the necessary, and often well deserved, contempt for his followers. In addition he has pulled off the tough but tender act. David Owen reckons that this is what is needed to win after Thatcher. The last thing one would want to meet on a dark night is Dr Owen with a *smile*. Kinnock, on the other hand, actually is a nice bloke, and now he has shown that he can be hard hitting as well. Yet he has used the necessary attack on fantastical left-wing demagogy as cover for bland radicalism, which seems to me almost as unrealistic as the politics of Militant. Is there really going to be a national minimum wage, more spending on defence, while capital repatriated from abroad will be guaranteed the equivalent rate of return, as Kinnock promises? Will no one be worse off? Who will pay for a Labour victory?

○

Take racism. Labour leaders were so much quicker and clearer in their criticism of Bernie Grant than of police racism, or for that matter of Lord Denning, former Master of the Rolls. He put on his heavy dentures and declared in the *Mail on Sunday* that 'what is happening on the streets of Britain today *is* a war. We have got to take the risk because the gentle hand has been abused. I dare say', he continued, 'there will be mistakes and innocent people will be hurt. That is ground for regret'. A rather one-sided regret. He specifically mentioned 'the tragic death of little John Shorthouse', a white boy, but not the shooting of Mrs Groce or the death of Mrs Jarrett. No black could read Denning's article without noticing the blind eye. Most policemen will have seen it as a wink. We need a forthright attack from the Labour leadership against this sort of stuff, naming names.

Islander

ROGER WODDIS

The Solitude of the People's Prince

I am Monarch (at least, on the day
  That Mother decides to depute);
From the centres of urban decay
  I recoil like a nervous recruit.
O solitude! where are the charms
  That sycophants see in my face?
I am told, in the midst of alarms,
  That Handsworth's a horrible place.

I am out of urbanity's reach,
  I must sit with my sorrow alone,
Non-party when making a speech
  As putative heir to the Throne.
I spoke off the cuff, I admit,
  And frankly, deserve all the flak,
But now Dr Hackney, the shit,
  Is making a Rod for my back.

Though the truth is that youth is depressed
  And cities are dark with despair,
'Ich dien', and they'll crawl to my crest,
  As long as they know that I care.
To paraphrase Great-Uncle Ted,
  A puppet who talks tommy-rot
Bemuses the mums who lack bread
  And reconciles bums to their lot.

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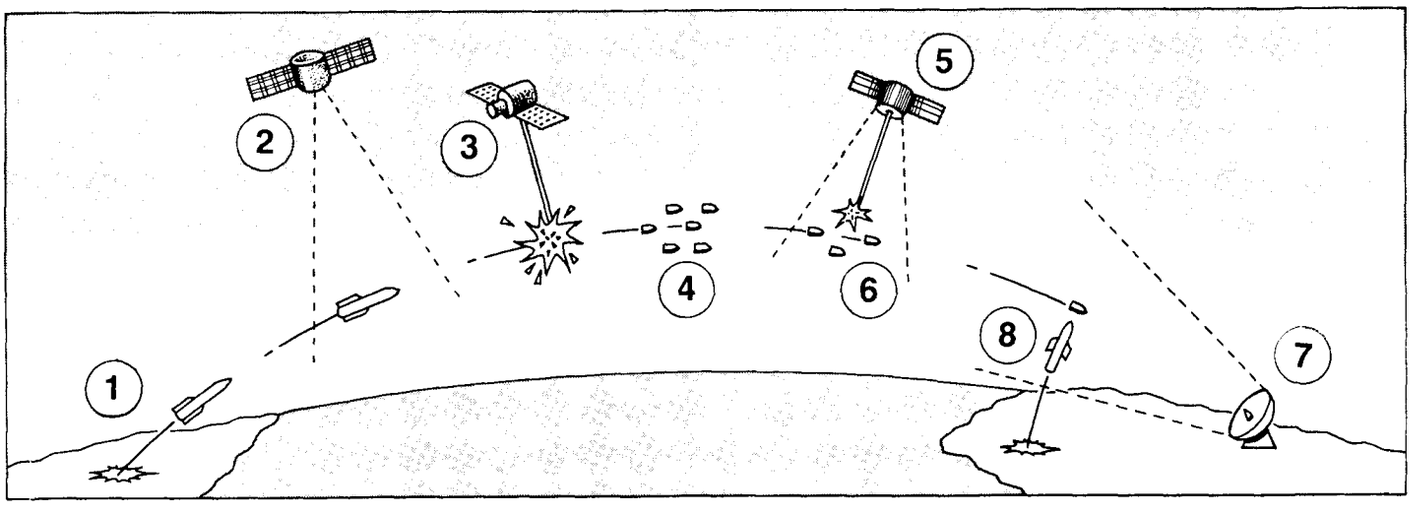

Lee Thomas/News on Sunday

TOTAL DEFENCE AGAINST MISSILES JUST ISN'T ON

Camera Press

As Gorbachev and Reagan prepare to meet, newly published Congressional documents make clear that the Paul Nitze criteria for a successful missile defence system are not being met by 'Star Wars' technology. FELIX PIRANI explains

WHEN MR GORBACHEV and Mr Reagan meet in Geneva later this month, there will be much diplomatic flurry about anti-satellite weapons and ballistic missile defence. Little attention, though, is being paid to the essential technical facts — that a partial missile defence system is implausible and a total defence is impossible.

The arguments against deployment of missile defence have been given new weight by the publication of two US Congressional documents. The twin documents are *Ballistic Missile Defense Technologies* and *Anti-Satellite Weapons, Countermeasures, and Arms Control.* Written in a low key, and presenting both sides of every question, they nevertheless make plain the insuperable obstacles to establishment of a missile defence. They were produced by the Office of Technology Assessment, which is responsible to Congress, not to the Reagan Administration.

Many of the facts of missile defence, and the relevant physical principles, are beyond dispute.

A satellite is usually launched into an orbit above the perceptible atmosphere, for otherwise it will quickly be brought down to earth by atmospheric drag. The motion of a satellite is determined by Newton's law of gravitation. Once some observations have been made, the future orbit can be predicted with great precision. The time for one circuit is determined by the diameter of the orbit; for an orbit at an altitude of a few hundred kilometres it is of the order of an hour and a half.

There are also several thousand ballistic missiles deployed, some on land and some in submarines. Each of them may be supposed to carry one or more re-entry vehicles containing a nuclear warhead. We are concerned here particularly with 'strategic' missiles with ranges measured in thousands of kilometres, rather than with shorter range; 'tactical' missiles and with 'ballistic' missiles, powered for only a comparatively short initial phase of their flight, called the 'boost' phase, rather than cruise missiles, which are powered throughout their flight.

In the boost phase, a ballistic missile rises to an altitude of several hundred kilometres, well above the effective limits of the earth's atmosphere. This is followed by the 'post-boost' phase, in which each re-entry vehicle is directed to its target. At this stage only small adjustments to the orbit are possible. The 'mid-course' phase which follows lasts about 15 minutes. In this phase, the re-entry vehicle moves under the force of gravity alone. When it re-enters the atmosphere, with about two minutes remaining before impact, atmospheric drag affects the motion.

From the point of view of predictability, the significant difference between missiles and satellites is in the time available for observations. The orbits in space are otherwise similar. For this reason, similar problems confront the designers of ballistic missile defence weapons and of anti-satellite weapons. However, the longer time available for observation of a satellite orbit is crucial.

The novelty of President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) was his demand for a total defence which would stop *all* missiles and thus render nuclear weapons 'impotent and obsolete'. It was immediately apparent that there was no chance of achieving this aim unless missiles could be attacked during the boost phase.

However, because of the curvature of the earth, the boost phase of a missile fired from a remote site cannot be observed immediately from the ground. Consequently, all methods of missile defence which require detection of the boost phase entail the use of satellites. Almost all methods would employ satellites to attack the missiles, as well. It is this satellite-basing which gave SDI its nickname 'Star Wars'.

Above right: Paul Nitze

Key to diagram: 1 — Missile launched from Siberia. 2 — Detected by US satellite. 3 — Attacked by laser from second satellite. 4 — Some warheads survive. 5 — Satellite detects these. 6 — US laser attacks them. 7 — Radar detects surviving warheads. 8 — US missiles attack them.

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The Congressional documents deal at length with the technical difficulties of space warfare. For purposes of exposition let us suppose that there are two adversaries involved, one of whom — Blue — has readied missiles armed with nuclear warheads, while the other — Red — intends to defend against these missiles by means of satellites.

Two principal difficulties confront Red: that satellites are sitting ducks, and that it is cheaper for Blue to strengthen his attack than for Red to strengthen his defence. The means available to Blue to overwhelm the Red defences are called 'countermeasures', classified as *passive, active,* or *threatening.*

A Blue 'passive' countermeasure is one which protects Blue missiles without directly affecting Red satellites. The prime passive countermeasure is the use of decoys and the simplest decoys are aluminised mylar balloons, to be dispensed with each re-entry vehicle.

In the mid-course phase above the atmosphere, a Blue balloon, like a Blue re-entry vehicle, will move according to the law of gravitation and Red will not be able to distinguish them by their orbits alone. Blue re-entry vehicles themselves could be enclosed in balloons, to make discrimination even more difficult. It might well be necessary for Red to destroy all Blue balloons in order to be sure of destroying all nuclear warheads. Since balloons can be much lighter than re-entry vehicles, Blue would lose little nuclear attacking power by dispensing large numbers of balloons with each re-entry vehicle.

In any case, balloons are much cheaper than satellites. According to the Congressional missile defence document: 'It cannot be emphasized too strongly that the ability to discriminate in [mid-course] phase is essential to the feasibility of the whole space-based BMD concept'. This ability is at present very far from being achieved.

An 'active' Blue countermeasure is one which interferes directly with a Red satellite, or seeks to destroy it. One example is the *space mine,* a satellite carrying an explosive charge, conventional or nuclear, that can be detonated on command. It could also be *salvage-fused,* in order to detonate when attacked or disturbed. Such devices would be deployed by Blue within lethal range of Red satellites and would trail them continuously.

'Threatening' countermeasures are those which increase the Blue missile threat to compensate for the possible effects of the Red missile defence system. The most straightforward threatening countermeasure is simply the deployment of more Blue missiles.

The Congressional missile defence document puts it both ways: 'If either side feared that its retaliatory capabilities were about to be lost or greatly reduced relative to those of the other side, there would be an incentive to add offensive and defensive capabilities at the same time'. It is this prospect which most clearly exhibits the danger that deployment of a missile defence will lead to a renewed arms race.

STATEMENTS by Russian authorities show that they take the same view. In an interview with the *Washington Post* last June, Colonel-General Nikolai Chervov of the Soviet general staff stated, 'We have made it clear that we will not ape the United States' in attempting space defence, but 'we will have an increase in offensive strategic weapons' which will be 'far cheaper, more economic'.

This was the logical response to a speech made in February by Paul Nitze, Reagan's Special Adviser for Arms Control Negotiations, who set out two criteria that a missile defence system would need to meet: that it should be harder for the attacker to destroy the defence than *vice versa,* and that the cost of an increase in defensive capability should be less than the cost of an increase in offensive capability.

Publication of the Congressional documents confirms what many informed technicians, whatever their opinions, have been saying for some time: existing and prospective technical capabilities satisfy neither of Nitze's two criteria. Even Edward Teller, a strong supporter of anti-missile weapon development, has said repeatedly that defence should not be based in space because 'satellites are costly to put up and cheap to shoot down'. But research on countermeasures and counter-countermeasures goes on and, if advocates have their way, testing and deployment would follow — the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty notwithstanding.

If space-based missile defence is so implausible, why is so much money being spent on it? One does not have to look very far for the answer. Ernest Mandel once remarked that 'the weapons systems are ruled by the Pentagon which is ruled by Washington which is ruled by Wall Street and not the other way round'. The US Electronic Industries Association recently held a conference on 'Exploring the Opportunities', at which it was predicted that SDI revenues would amount to $69 billion between now and 1994.

A recent study by the Council for Economic Priorities, an independent American research organisation, fills in some other details. It estimates that the US scientific and technical SDI workforce will grow from 5,000 in 1984 to 18,600 in 1987. For a two-year period studied by the council, about 87 per cent, or $1.4 billion, of SDI contract funds went to the top ten US defence contractors. Among them are Boeing ($364 million), Lockheed ($240 million), McDonnell-Douglas ($236 million), LTV Aerospace ($210 million) and Teledyne ($115 million).

Three of those ten are also contractors for the MX missile, four of them for the B-1 bomber, two of them for cruise missiles. Seven of them were awarded 'systems architecture' contracts for preliminary design of the overall structure of a missile defence system. SDI has not generated a new military-industrial complex — it has fallen into the hands of the old one. About 95 per cent of the contracts went to five states — California, Washington, Texas, Alabama and Massachusetts. Senators from four of these five states sit on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Meanwhile, Europeans are also looking at SDI with greedy eyes. Mr Heseltine, the Defence Secretary, met US Defense Secretary Weinberger in Brussels this week to ask for a guaranteed British share, reportedly $1.5 billion, in SDI research. An SDI bandwagon has begun to roll here as well. It isn't too late to stop it. □

Felix Pirani is Emeritus Professor of Rational Mechanics in London University.

ITALY

CRAXI PAPERS OVER THE CRACKS

DONALD SASSOON describes how the Rome-Washington alliance has been restored after a crisis that has shaken Italian public opinion to the core

THE QUARREL between the Italian government (or rather the temporary government, as a new coalition has not yet been patched together) and the US is over. Prime Minister Craxi and President Reagan met in Washington and smiled for the benefit of photographers.

The incidents surrounding the saga of the hijacked *Achille Lauro* are now said to be forgotten. Bettino Craxi had at first decided not to go to the US and not to attend the summit. A conciliatory visit from Schultz's deputy and a friendly 'Dear Bettino' letter from Reagan made him change his mind. Reagan declared that Italy remains 'an important ally'. That was deemed sufficient to satisfy Italian national dignity.

Yet none of this will be forgotten. No one has apologised. No one can cancel the fact that the forty-fourth Italian government since the war fell on a foreign policy issue in which Italian national interests were visibly seen to be at variance with those of the US.

The clash between Italy and its powerful ally was already in the air before the *Achille Lauro* incident. For well over two years the Italian foreign minister, Giulio Andreotti, a leading member of the Christian Democratic Party (DC), had been busy making friends in the Middle East, particularly among the hardliners. In November 1983 he flew to meet the Syrian leader Assad and announced that the road to a Middle Eastern settlement must necessarily go through Damascus. Later — to American dismay — he met the Libyan leader twice, while Craxi saw Arafat.

This pro-Arab line was reiterated in 1984 when Andreotti supported the Iraqi position at the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly in Geneva by voting for a motion which condemned both Israel and the US. After last month's Israeli raid on Tunis Andreotti went as far as to draw an analogy between Israeli policies and Nazi retaliation against the Italian Resistance.

Andreotti's and Craxi's Middle Eastern ambitions were now abundantly obvious: to acquire for Italy the role of 'Great Mediator' in the Middle Eastern conflict.

The main domestic opponent of this line has been the pro-American, pro-Israeli Republican Party (PRI), led by Defence Minister Giovanni Spadolini. According to Spadolini, there is no room for an independent European mediation in the Middle East.

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Camera Press

Prime Minister Craxi: no apology but a 'Dear Bettino' letter from Ronnie

During the course of the recent crisis Spadolini declared: 'There cannot be an Italian mediation outside of the link between Europe and the USA. If there is one area in which European-US partnership must be fully operational it is the Middle East. It is useless to try to change the basic parameters of the situation. What cannot be changed is the special rapport between the USA and Israel'. Italy, continued Spadolini, echoing his predecessor La Malfa, must hold on desperately to the Alps and hence to Europe so as to avoid being dragged down by the Mediterranean and North Africa.

This has indeed been the dominant trend in Italian foreign policy. It evolved 'naturally' from Italy's postwar position when Italian Christian Democracy emerged as the leading party. The early neutralist tendencies of the Catholic political tradition were crushed by political and economic imperatives.

The political imperative required that Christian Democracy obtain not just national but also international legitimacy (i.e. with the Americans). The economic imperative required that Italy's foreign trade be directed towards Western Europe as the Middle Eastern and North African markets were too restricted and anyway under the control of the French, the British and, later, of the Americans. The communist and socialist left was ousted from the tripartite coalition and Italian foreign policy came to be based on the twin pillars of NATO and the EEC.

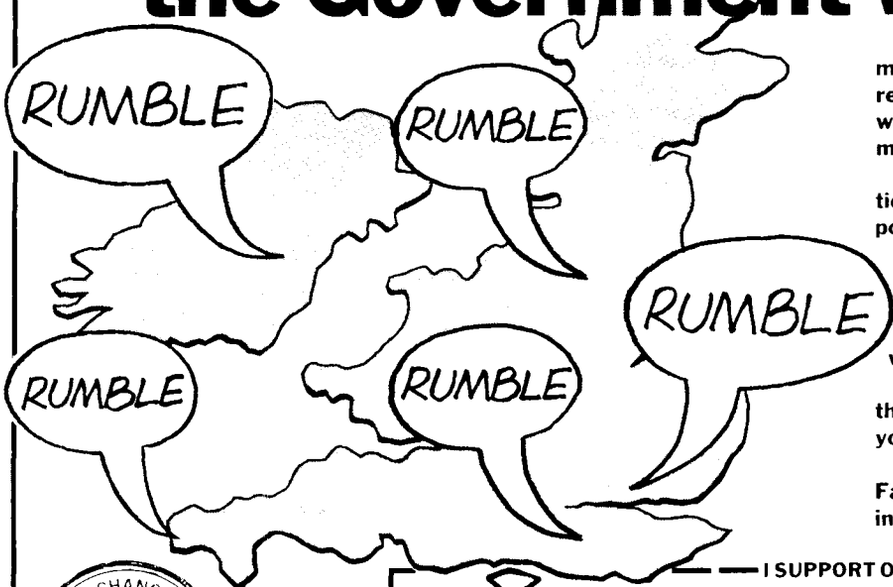
Since then Italian foreign policy has been virtually non-existent. Obedience to American will was taken for granted. Foreign policy became internalised. Leading coalition parties vied with each other as to which had the best connections in Washington. In 1963 the Socialist Party abandoned its alliance with the Communists to join forces with the DC and form the first Centre-Left coalition. The price it had to pay was an acceptance of those twin pillars. By the 1970s even the Italian Communist Party had accepted the full implications of Italy's European and Atlantic commitments and supported membership of the EEC and of NATO. Foreign policy had ceased to be a divisive issue in Italian politics.

The 'neutralist' tendency in Italian foreign policy did have its moment of glory in the late '50s and early '60s, when the Italian State Oil Company (ENI) under Enrico Mattei sought to establish direct links with the oil-producing countries — by-passing the powerful cartel of the seven oil multinationals. Its political cover was the Fanfani wing of Christian Democracy. Mattei died in a mysterious plane crash and Fanfani's 'Gaullist' tendencies died with him. Since then Italy has been, in the words of a leading Italian political commentator, the 'Bulgaria of the West'.

As the Middle Eastern crisis escalates, it has become clear — even to the Americans' best friends in Italy — that it is no longer possible to allow the US to hold all the Middle East cards. It is significant that recent attempts to develop at least the rudiments of an independent line have come from Craxi and Andreotti, whose political past is impeccably 'Atlanticist'.

Andreotti was for years the Minister of Defence and widely considered to be the Americans' man in successive Italian governments. Craxi is genuinely anti-communist, virulently anti-Soviet and was totally committed to the installation of cruise missiles on Italian soil. Neither of them, however, could ignore Italy's geopolitical interests, which require good relations with all

If we all fast for a day maybe the Government will listen.



Last year the British Government spent as much on storing surplus food as it did on famine relief. And while more food is being produced world-wide than ever before, there are still 750 million people who are undernourished.

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the countries of the Mediterranean.

When the *Achille Lauro* affair broke, the Italian government tried to exploit the goodwill it had recently accumulated in various Arab capitals. At first Andreotti tried to involve Syria as a mediator with the terrorists. There was an immediate American veto: the US was afraid to repeat the unpleasant experience of the TWA hijack in Beirut in June when it was forced to accept the mediation of people over whom it had no control. The Italians obeyed, obtaining from President Assad of Syria a swift condemnation of the terrorists.

When the ship moved to Egypt, the Italians approached Mubarak. Again the Americans tried to veto the initiative. This time the Italians stood their ground. They were pleased to have resolved the affair without the use of force and to have emerged with credit. They even expected a little praise from Washington.

They were genuinely surprised to find out that Reagan wanted his pound of flesh: the hijackers *and* their leader. Spadolini retained his reputation as Reagan's poodle and resigned, bringing down the ruling coalition.

WHAT HAS ALSO emerged is that the Americans, too, were genuinely surprised that their demands, made with eyes only on American public opinion, would have such a devastating effect on the Italian government. In the White House there is a long standing ignorance of Italian politics.

There are many excellent Italianists in American universities, but American presidents have preferred to rely on a number of mafia-tainted Italo-Americans; or 'historians' such as Michael Ledeen, who has been declared 'undesirable' by the Italian authorities because of his alleged connections with ex-secret service agents suspected of terrorism.

Reagan, like his predecessors, has a single obsession: American public opinion. The national dignity of its allies and the need they too have to worry about their public opinion is seen as irrelevant. This time the US has badly underestimated the strength of feelings in Italy, the general desire to count for something, if not in the world, at least in the Mediterranean. Italy may long have been a loyal servant of the Empire, but servants have feelings too.

The present Italian crisis will eventually be resolved. It is likely that the same coalition will be reconstituted, with Craxi as Prime Minister again, although — given the Byzantine nature of Italian politics — only a fool would make a firm prediction. Italian foreign policy will continue to make some further timid steps towards a more independent line.

Yet Italian politics will remain as fragile as ever. After all, the present crisis was caused by a party, the Republican, which has 5 per cent of the vote, against four parties which together have 51 per cent and which were supported on this issue by the Italian Communists, with 30 per cent.

Craxi, who had been able to withstand the Communist onslaught against his austerity and his pro-cruise policies, was sunk by the ripple effects of four terrorists in panic who hijacked a ship and killed a seventy-year-old American citizen. Yet it is precisely because of the powerful destabilising consequences of the enduring Middle Eastern crisis that Italy cannot afford to change course. □

SOUTH AFRICA

ZULU VIOLENCE WORKS FOR BOTHA

The current 'treason' trials are a key part of the current crackdown on the multi-racial opposition to apartheid. But in Natal open violence is being used by Zulu gangs to murder and intimidate the same opposition, reports GEOFFREY BINDMAN

CHIEF GATSHA Buthelezi presents himself as a man of peace — opposed to apartheid, but an independent moderating influence between the Botha government and the revolutionaries of the African National Congress.

On 19 October, I attended meetings in Durban of the Democratic Lawyers' Association and the United Democratic Front. No one there could retain any illusions about Buthelezi's real role as an agent — conscious or astonishingly naive — of the South African State.

Mafika Mbuli is a member of the DLA and one of the most experienced black lawyers in Durban, where he has practised for about 15 years. In vivid and appalling detail he described his recent experiences at the hand of Buthelezi's Inkatha gangs or 'impis'. These youths, marching the streets in semi-military formation, carrying guns and petrol bombs as well as the assegais and pangas of their Zulu forefathers, have terrorised the inhabitants of African or Indian townships in Natal.

Lawyers and other professional people, who refuse to swallow the simplistic nationalism and mindless rituals which Inkatha preaches, are particular targets. As a leading UDF activist, Mafika was vulnerable on both counts.

On 11 September, a friend warned him that his house was to be burned down that night. Keeping watch at 1.30 am he saw men approaching with guns and cans of petrol. He was unarmed but had prepared hoses to put out any fires and had boarded up his windows. Suddenly, there were explosions round the house and fires started up everywhere except the living room, into which shots were then fired. Luckily, Mafika and his family were able to put the fires out and escaped unhurt.

The police were called but showed little interest. Next afternoon, Mafika was told that an impi was on its way to finish the job it had failed to complete in the night. He again called the police. They promised to come but did not turn up. This time he did not wait for the mob, but bundled his children into his car and drove to the police station. He tried to persuade the police to come at once but they refused. He drove back to the house to find it blazing, with the police standing outside watching. Afterwards he found his windows and walls scarred by bird shot, used only by the police. No one was arrested.

The murderers of another leading lawyer, Victoria Mxenge, have not been identified, but her memorial service was attacked by the impis, a mourner was killed, and several cars were burned, again with the police looking on. In mid-October a house occupied by Victoria's partner Bheka Shelli and another lawyer Aubrey Nyembezi was burned down. Nyembezi had shortly beforehand made a speech opposing the incorporation of the township of Claremont into Buthelezi's homeland of KwaZulu.

On 18 October there was a further petrol bomb attack on the house where Mrs Mxenge's orphaned children are now living. They fortunately escaped injury. The co-operation, usually passive but sometimes very active, of the police in Inkatha violence is common knowledge. One victim, waiting at the police station for his complaint of shooting at his house to be attended to, recognised one of his attackers, when he came boldly into the station asking for a fresh supply of bullets.

The level of uncontrolled Inkatha violence, evidently condoned by the government, led the Democratic Lawyers Association to take an unusual initiative. They decided to raise the matter with Mr Justice John Milne, Judge President of the Natal Provincial Division of the Supreme Court.

They enlisted the assistance of Tony Brokenshaw, President of the Natal Law Society. He arranged a meeting with the judge attended by 11 members of the Association, including Mr Hassan Mall, one of only two Indian senior counsel in the whole of South Africa. The judge was evidently concerned and sympathetic and promised to raise the matter directly with Mr Louis Le Grange, the Minister for Law and Order, and to report back.

But nothing has changed. On 21 October, it was reported in the Durban press that Mafika Mbuli's office had been raided by the police and documents taken away. On the same day I visited the African township of Imbali, near Pietermaritzburg, where I was shown a house of a UDF member burned down by the impis, and the site of a roadblock set up by them to stop taxis. The taxis were then set on fire. I saw two burned out wrecks.

Chief Buthelezi claims membership of Inkatha at over a million, but I was told that the impis are recruited mainly by threats and promises. Inkatha controls the allocation of houses and jobs in KwaZulu and elsewhere. Those who drive out UDF supporters are promised their homes.

Since its formation in 1983 the UDF is the best supported non-racial political grouping within South Africa. Since its successful boycott of the new 'tri-cameral' legislature it has

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been seen by the government as a major threat, but 'banning' it appears impracticable.

Instead the government has chosen to use various forms of intimidation. The current treason trials in Natal and Transvaal have put many of the UDF's leaders out of circulation, possibly for another 2 years, even if they are eventually acquitted. Many other activists are constantly being picked up and held for long periods in prison without charge. Buthelezi's impis have become an important element in the government's strategy. □

Geoffrey Bindman went as an observer to the current treason trials on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists.

GRENADA

STILL IN POST-OP SHOCK

Grenada's ousted Marxists still haven't been sent to trial, and coup rumours shake the dilapidated regime of prime minister Blaize. GREG CHAMBERLAIN reports

TWO YEARS after Ronald Reagan sent 7,000 troops to recapture tiny Grenada for God and the West (and expunge the humiliations of Lebanon) the Caribbean island's ousted Marxist 'baddies' are still stuck in a mountaintop jail awaiting trial. US Ambassador Roy Haverkamp and the small CIA team left behind by the invasion force have had to grapple with the niceties of the former British colony's 'Westminster system'. The two worlds met colourfully this week when the Queen, still Grenada's nominal head of state, visited the island.

Meanwhile, jacket, collar and tie are back in for sessions of Parliament and the political talk around the ailing conservative prime minister, 67-year-old Herbert Augustus Blaize, is often as if the four-year left-wing experiment under Maurice Bishop had never been.

Bernard Coard, Bishop's deputy and source of much of the regime's energy, and his once-powerful wife Phyllis, have long ago lost their status as the island's fattest politicians — thanks to the regime of prison life. Their trial, together with 17 other top figures, for murdering Bishop as the revolution imploded on 19 October 1983 officially began a year ago. But the prisoners, who all face the death penalty, refused to recognise the court and it took nine more months for the government to find a team of lawyers, from Jamaica, for 17 of them and another month for the Coards to find their own counsel, also from Jamaica. Grenadian lawyers have refused to touch the case.

The 30 or so hearings so far, at which the accused rarely appear, have dealt only with technical points. The judge, Grenada's aged Chief Justice, Sir Archibald Nedd, has agreed with the government that despite the overthrow of the revolutionaries, the tough anti-subversion laws and the island's Supreme Court that they set up are still in being.

The defence, ironically, wants the case to go into the Eastern Caribbean regional court system, which Bishop opted out of for reasons of Grenadian national independence. For it says that there is little hope of a fair hearing in Grenada because of 'massive, deliberate pre-trial publicity'.

It is indeed hard to imagine finding an unbiased jury, with so many Grenadians still deeply traumatised by the assassination of the beloved Bishop. Many would physically have a go at the Coards if the defendants were released into the streets, whatever the old regime's apologists might pretend.

The defence has protested about the behaviour of the hardline prison governor, Lionel Maloney, a Barbadian, and has sought to have him jailed for preventing access to the defendants and for allowing occasional beatings of the island's former rulers.

One million pounds of public money has been spent so far on just the trial preliminaries, according to a government source. Three weeks ago, the case was adjourned yet again, until at least the middle of next month, and will now simply join the queue at the next island assizes. Sir Archibald is retiring. There are still more technical challenges to hear.

Some suggest that the Coards, General Hudson Austin (who nominally ruled Grenada for a week between Bishop's murder and the invasion) and the others hope that with the passage of time the prosecution — and Grenadians generally — will lose interest, resulting in only light sentences.

Meanwhile, the old-world Mr Blaize is no paragon of constitutional democracy. Even his own supporters complain about his autocratic style, favouritism and failure to call Parliament.

The remnants of the Left, which says it is the target of constant harassment and US-inspired burglaries and surveillance, are trying to stop the extradition to the US of trade unionist Chester Humphrey on charges of illegally shipping arms to the revolutionaries before they took power.

Blaize has agreed to hand over Humphrey, who has been on hunger strike for nearly two months, despite the absence of an extradition treaty with Washington. Two top government legal officials have been criticised for accepting $5,000 each from the US government for work on the case, but Blaize has said they have done nothing wrong.

An attempt inside the ruling centre-right coalition to depose Blaize failed last July, but another may soon succeed. For the moment though, all seems quiet, despite the dilapidated economy and Blaize's failure to draw the new investment 'promised' by Washington after the invasion.

The government declared the invasion anniversary last weekend a public holiday. But the US embassy, housed in a rambling old wooden beach hotel, watches jealously over the regime on which it has staked — and, for the invasion, spent — so much.

The US naval commander in the Caribbean warned recently that American troops were ready to return any time it was deemed Grenada's 'security' was threatened. □

Cypriot women in the labour market
An exploration of myths and reality
by William J. House
Despite new job opportunities resulting from changes in the economy in Cyprus in recent years, women are still largely excluded from the professions and are mainly concentrated in low-level occupations in the manufacturing, trade and service sectors. This book looks into the potential conflict between raising the rate of female labour force participation and halting the decline in fertility. The functioning of the labour market is explored, particularly the way in which women are treated in terms of recruitment, training and pay discrimination. It will be of use to planners and governments requiring effective policies to promote equal opportunities not only in Cyprus but other middle-income southern European countries.
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LETTERS

What disarmament really means

Hamish Soutar, Firdene, Redlynch, Salisbury, Wilts.

The 'campaign to stop the deployment of cruise. . .is over and has failed' (*NS* editorial 25 October). No. The deployment of a nuclear weapon is a lengthy process from the germ of an idea in a research lab to the (hopefully never reached) endpoint of its actual use. What we (CND/the peace movement) did was publicly to set ourselves the target of stopping cruise at one particular stage of that process, and our acknowledged failure to achieve that has caused much anguish, acrimony and demoralisation over the past two years.

However, that is not the end of the matter. If we have failed in relation to our self-proclaimed target, then so have Heseltine and Nato in relation to theirs. Moreover, activists in Cruisewatch and the peace camps can claim considerable success in at least delaying the deployment process following the arrival of the first missiles at Greenham. The stronger case now is for intensifying, rather than abandoning, the resistance to cruise, with the aim of eventually reversing that process; and few of us would be members of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament if we did not believe that such reversals are both necessary and possible — that, after all, is what 'disarmament' actually means.

I suspect that those who take the advice of the *New Statesman* on Star Wars and cruise will not be members of the peace movement but supporters of the SDP's version of the Freeze. For our part, cruise remains a proper concern for all the reasons which have been enunciated a million times in the past six years. Here in the south, we're launching a new publication, the 'Southern Resister' (£4.50 pa from the above address) to give greater emphasis to that campaign; at Molesworth, preparations are in hand for a mass blockade in February; Cruisewatch continues, and so do the Greenham and Molesworth peace camps. . .you don't really want us to give up, do you?

CND's tide?

Julian Lewis, Director, Policy Research Associates, London SE1

Like Bruce Kent (Letters, 25 October), I was intrigued by the CND's recent Gallup Poll apparently showing that '46 per cent of the British people oppose a defence policy relying on the possible use of nuclear weapons'. Did it really mean, as Bruce claims, that 'the tide is moving in [CND's] direction'?

So I commissioned Gallup to ask simply whether 'Britain should or should not continue to possess nuclear weapons as long as the Soviet Union has them'. The overall result showed 68 per cent in favour of continued possession of them under these circumstances, 26 per cent opposed to it, and 6 per cent undecided. Labour voters favoured retention by 49 per cent to 44 per cent, and Liberal voters by 75 per cent to 19 per cent.

It would thus appear that CND's more favourable result for unilateralism derived from the re-formulation of its poll question — not from any shift whatsoever in public opinion.

In her own right

Chris George, Jenni Hall, Barbara Rogers, Everywoman Co-op, London N1

There is indeed a dizzy pace to women's magazine publishing (Susan Ardill and Sue O'Sullivan *NS* 25 October), but there is much more to this 'flurry of activity' than appears to have met the eye of your writers.

Ever since *Everywoman* launched nine months ago we have been working on bridging the gap between the two traditional markets of the big budget women's glossies and the 'right-on' feminist publications with their currently limited circulations. We were therefore surprised that your writers in describing innovations in women's publishing omitted to mention *Everywoman*. After all our achievements have helped to set the scene for the re-launched *Spare Rib* and *Women's Review*.

Everywoman has shown that it is possible to break those two mutually exclusive moulds and has reached a wider based audience of women thus reflecting the changing experiences and expectations of all women. We have proved that you can produce a good magazine on a remarkably small budget. The readers are there, sick to death of non-stop consumerism and 'how to get your man'. As our daily post bag indicates they respond eagerly to our lively, informative and non-prescriptive approach and it's the readers from whom we take our cue.

We know that *Everywoman* is important in influencing other publications. A provincial newspaper has admitted to lifting our ideas and angles and a local paper is modelling its newly acquired women's page on *Everywoman*. We are told that students on journalism courses have been handed copies of *Everywoman* as examples of a standard to which they could aspire. Advertisers have shown a marked interest in our readership looking to define the 'real' women of today — the women they are finding it difficult to reach. We are delighted because we want not only to fulfill the needs and desires of our readers but also to influence the press as a whole.

Any serious and independent reviewer of women's magazines would be willing to acknowledge that *Everywoman* deserves a mention in her own right.

Advice to a young man

T. R. M. Creighton, Taunton, Somerset

I have only just seen Alan Brien's review of Frances Donaldson's *Evelyn Waugh: A Country Neighbour* (*NS* 18 October). It contains several versions of a story about advice from an older, more important man, (variously Waugh, Lord Clinton or someone anonymous) to a younger, less confident one to 'have a word with your man' or to 'sack your man' for some sartorial gaffe. The earliest version is attributed to Sir Edward Marsh, the latest to Michael Frayn after Waugh's death in 1966. It would be interesting to know how all these versions relate as regards veracity and chronology to the following anecdote (not sartorial) which I know to be true because it happened to me.

One morning in August or September, 1949, I bought in the Bayswater Road a 1933 Rolls Bentley 3½ litre coupé, registration number ANU 264 for £350 which I could not in the least afford. I did not examine it mechanically and was not qualified to do so. In the afternoon, I drove it towards Petworth to spend the weekend as guest of Lord Leconfield, (the old Charles Leconfield). The car broke down on the way and I was rescued and towed into Petworth by Brown, the head chauffeur and mechanic. Nothing more was said till Monday morning when it was time to go, and Lord Leconfield put a kindly hand on my shoulder and said that Brown had put my car right; the trouble was only blocked oil filters caused by poor maintenance but — *ipsissima verba* — 'my advice to you, my dear fellow, is, when you get home, sack your man'. I am quite certain he was not joking. The story is told in John Wyndham's autobiography (cf which I have not a copy by me so cannot give date of publication or page reference) without mentioning my name. I suggest this is probably the source of all subsequent versions. I do not know how it may fit in with Eddie Marsh.

Take me to your Leader
By Mannie Minnie
Galactic hack BLURB lies helpless in the gutter at the mercy of vicious, impersonal MARKET FORCES. SERKEEF, lunatic henchman of the invisible Hand, looks on...
SERKEEF! CALL THEM OFF!
WHAAT?!
YOU EXPECT ME TO BETRAY MY MOST SACRED PRINCIPLES? TO SPEND MY WAY OUT OF YOUR RECESSION? TO SET UP IMPORT CONTROLS... TURN ON THE MONEY SUPPLY LIKE A HOSE... JUST TO SAVE YOUR TIN SKIN??
SERKEEF COME HERE!
COLLAR AND CHAIN, SERKEEF. AND JUST WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT? YOU'VE HARDLY EATEN ANY OF THOSE TEACHERS I PUT IN YOUR CAGE.
SORRY YOUR IRONSHIP
COMMONWEALTH LEADERS
HELP ME, YOUR IRONSHIP!
CERTAINLY NOT. I'M NOT EVEN TALKING TO YOU UNTIL YOU RENOUNCE VIOLENCE!
JOHN MINNION 83

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Open letter to Benjamin Zephaniah

Bandele Kensdale, London SE27

No, Benjamin Zephaniah (*NS* 18 October). Even though its only a poem (poetry only being appreciated by thinking people, and therefore people sympathetic to the likes of you and me — poetry is ignored by the kinds of people you/we despise); even though it's printed in the *New Statesman* (where, you have to admit, the bulk of your readership will be partisan, by definition) — you still have to get it right, get it absolutely right, as otherwise you'll just be laughed out of court with that trite old cliché: 'Qui s'excuse, s'accuse'.

Frustration (however you choose to spell it) will never justify violence. You make it sound like kids smashing a toy they don't understand when it won't do what they want it to. Trumpeting the right feeling of your position (doesn't he feel any regret?) you half claim violence is the means — to peaceful co-existence? You deny the possibilities of peaceful working solutions. In the end you don't do justice to your own case — and the images of your argument explain, colourfully, why not.

White living is not quite as you picture it in this country. It may be like that in South Africa — where no-holds-barred confrontations with authority, in the face of exploitation and capital punishment, have come to be the last ditch resort to gain the world's attention — but there isn't any point in rioting in London. (Let us not forget countries where oppression is equally grim but less obvious, because the people involved belong to the same ethnic background). We are, however dull this sounds, thousands of miles from apartheid. . .

As political expression, what happened in Brixton and Tottenham was disastrous. It will have achieved nothing for the cause. Something *will*, I believe, happen in S.A., where a clear goal, the ending of discrimination, can be seen to be fought for. But nothing like that will happen in the UK — because the entire situation is different. Violence here is far, far more likely to alienate the bulk of the population who are not racist, simply helplessly indifferent, sadly apathetic, caught up in the coils of their own personal worries ('we've got problems of our own, thank you very much. . .'). Not to mention the alienation of the opinion of many ordinary people — of all races — who don't resort to fire bombing to make their voices heard. No one will ever listen to a looter. It mustn't happen again — not like that. The energy must be organised. . .

As a man with a following, you should be careful what you say, if you wish to retain your own credibility ('maybe he simply doesn't like whites. . .') Ask yourself if it wasn't the extensive media coverage of events on the other side of the world that gave some of the youths involved the wrong idea of what they were up against. Something *new* has to be said.

Re-distribution of power

Julian Bird, York

Anthony Arblaster (Letters 18 October), fails to address the question of why the Kinnock assault touched a countrywide chord. Party and union conferences are in reality far from the democratic bodies they present themselves to be. This is shown at its clearest when *representatives* at union conferences pass a motion and then say it is time to go out and persuade the membership to support the new policy. So much for unions representing their members. The Labour Party conference has a similar respect for the views of the Party's supporters.

As socialists we need to acknowledge that institutions created under other historical conditions may no longer be appropriate. We need organisational forms that invite participation not exclude it. For instance, if meetings are boring and incomprehensible to newcomers then the organisation must alter to better fit people's needs rather than non-attenders be condemned as apathetic.

Kinnock has learnt that unrepresentative conferences can be bypassed. The realistic response is the empowering of those at the bottom of the hierarchy not the shoring up of the outdated conference form. Socialism is about distributing power not just swapping one unrepresentative elite for another — or are my interpretations of liberty and equality completely chaotic?

The case against Kadar

Horia Georgescu, London SW20

Will a Romanian exile be the only person to protest against the official visit to Britain of Janos Kadar of Hungary (*NS* 25 October)?

He became, in 1956, the hated tool of Soviet imperialism, helping the Red army to crush with its tanks the most spontaneous, genuine and popular revolution in modern history. Conniving with Tito and Gheorghiu-Dej of Romania, he liquidated the revolutionary leadership of Imre Nagy.

At that time, Romanians, free or in prison, forgot their centuries-old quarrels with the Hungarians and supported their revolt — which they were ready to join, had its fate not been sealed by Soviet intervention — while Eden's Britain and Mollet's France were attacking Egypt.

It seems now that Hungarians have traded their ideals for 'goulash Communism' while Kadar has replaced Ceausescu in the Western mythology as the crafty leader standing up to the Russians, becoming the 'father' of his people and 'liberalising' the country, etc. In fact, he is gobbling up Western credits with Moscow's approval, toes the Kremlin's line in foreign policy and is trying to divert the frustrations of the intellectuals towards revanchist and chauvinistic dreams of reconquest of Romanian, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav territories.

Separating law from order

Michael Barratt, London Fire Brigade

You refer (*NS* 11 October) to the Fire Brigade's fear of their loss of neutral role at the scene of a civil disturbance.

The role of the Fire Service is clearly defined with regard to its three primary functions: to save life, to render humanitarian service and to prevent the destruction of property by fire. Should we encounter any serious or impending threat to any member of the crew or the appliance and equipment, the officer in charge will react by calling the police in the same why that any member of the public would. The Fire Brigade, however, presents itself on the scene of a civil disturbance in the role of responsible society members annulling the attempts of the rioters to create disorder. Therefore, any participant in a riot must find it impossible to sympathise with or ignore the actions of the Brigade in its, necessarily sustained, attempts to restore what can only be described as 'order' with regard to the scope of its three objectives.

The question of restoring '*Law* and Order' is, however, one which the Fire Brigade cannot and should not entertain. This is the realm of the police, whose selection and extensive training has always considered and prepared them for this extremely complex and sensitive role. As an emergency service the Fire Brigade is as different from the police as the ambulance service and coastguards are. All four can and do work together when the occasion demands, yet it must be remembered that each is there to serve a specific purpose which cannot be compromised.

Substance v. science

Dr E.W. Kellermann, London NW3

Your Political Editor (*NS* 25 October) has made the discovery that the late Bob Mackenzie's Swingometer can be computerised. Like so many scientists, political or physical, he gets carried away by his model producing predictable and rather boring results.

I am looking forward to the day when your political centre page will contain an article by Peter Kellner in which substance replaces technicality. Why not discuss political ideas and programmes which could persuade more than 40 per cent of the electorate to vote Labour?

Christmas behind bars

Abdul Minty, Hon. Sec, Anti-Apartheid Movement, 13 Mandela Street, London NW1 0DW

We hear much in the news about the arrest and detention in South Africa and Namibia of those who dare to oppose apartheid. This has been particularly true since the declaration of the State of Emergency — in effect martial law — in South Africa this July.

Some of those imprisoned are well known. For example, this year will be the 23rd that Winnie and Nelson Mandela have spent separated, with Winnie Mandela banished and Nelson Mandela imprisoned. Nearly the entire national and regional leadership of the United Democratic Front is in detention, on trial for High Treason or in hiding.

But there are also many hundreds of women and men whose names are not so widely known suffering long prison sentences or banning orders for their courageous stand against apartheid.

May we therefore ask readers if they would take the opportunity of Christmas and the New Year to show their support by sending seasonal greetings to the banned and banished and to the families of political prisoners and detainees, and to the families of those who have been executed or murdered in detention in Namibia and South Africa.

We know from the past that such greetings are very much appreciated. Please write to us for a list of names and addresses, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. The last posting date for airmail cards is 5 December.

THE ANCIENT WISDOM

There is a tradition that behind all the religions and philosophies, there is a vein of persisting truths which never change. They relate to the very nature of the Cosmos, both on the vast and the minute scale. We are in and of that nature. Makes you think — Yes?

For more details write to:
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Sarah Baylis

Ruthy and Edie

Short Story by Grace Paley

ONE DAY in the Bronx two small girls named Edie and Ruthy were sitting on the stoop steps. They were talking about the real world of boys. Because of this, they kept their skirts pulled tight around their knees. A gang of boys who lived across the street spent at least one hour of every Saturday afternoon pulling up girls' dresses. They needed to see the color of a girl's underpants in order to scream outside the candy store, Edie wears pink panties.

Ruthy said, anyway, she liked to play with those boys. They did more things. Edie said she hated to play with them. They hit and picked up her skirt. Ruthy agreed. It *was* wrong of them to do this. But, she said, they ran around the block a lot, had races, and played war on the corner. Edie said it wasn't *that* good.

Ruthy said, Another thing, Edie, you could be a soldier if you're a boy.

So? What's so good about that?

Well, you could fight for your country.

Edie said, I don't want to.

What? Edie! Ruthy was a big reader and most interesting reading was about bravery — for instance Roland's Horn at Roncevaux. Her father had been brave and there was often a lot of discussion about this at suppertime. In fact, he sometimes modestly said, Yes, I suppose I was brave in those days. And so was your mother, he added. Then Ruthy's mother put his boiled egg in front of him where he could see it. Reading about Roland, Ruthy learned that if a country wanted to last, it would require a great deal of bravery. She nearly cried with pity when she thought of Edie and the United States of America.

You don't want to? she asked.

No.

Why, Edie, why?

I don't feel like.

Why, Edie? How come?

You always start hollering if I don't do what you tell me. I don't always have to say what you tell me. I can say whatever I like.

Yeah, but if you love your country you have to go fight for it. How come you don't want to? Even if you get killed, it's worth it.

Edie said, I don't want to leave my mother.

Your mother? You must be a baby. Your mother?

Edie pulled her skirt very tight over her knees. I don't like it when I don't see her a long time. Like when she went to Springfield to my uncle. I don't like it.

Oh boy! said Ruthy. Oh boy! She stood up. She wanted to go away. She just wanted to jump from the top step, run down to the corner, and wrestle with someone. She said, You know, Edie, this is *my* stoop.

Edie didn't budge. She leaned her chin on her knees and felt sad. She was a big reader too, but she liked *The Bobbsey Twins* or *Honey Bunch at the Seashore.* She loved that nice family life. She tried to live it in the three rooms on the fourth floor. Sometimes she called her father Dad, or

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even Father, which surprised him. Who? he asked.

I have to go home now, she said. My cousin Alfred's coming. She looked to see if Ruthy was still mad. Suddenly she saw a big dog. Ruthy, she said, getting to her feet. There's a dog coming. Ruthy turned. There *was* a dog about three-quarters of the way down the block between the candy store and the grocer's. It was an ordinary middle-sized dog. But it *was* coming. It didn't stop to sniff at curbs or pee on the house fronts. It just trotted steadily along the middle of the sidewalk.

Ruthy watched him. Her heart began to thump and take up too much space inside her ribs. She thought speedily, Oh, a dog has teeth! It's large, hairy, strange. Nobody can say what a dog is thinking. A dog is an animal. You could talk to a dog, but a dog couldn't talk to you. If you said to a dog, STOP! a dog would just keep going. If it's angry and bites you, you might get rabies. It will take you about six weeks to die and you will die screaming in agony. Your stomach will turn into a rock and you will have lockjaw. When they find you, your mouth will be paralyzed wide open in your dying scream.

Ruthy said, I'm going right now. She turned as though she'd been directed by some far-off switch. She pushed the hall door open and got safely inside. With one hand she pressed the apartment bell. With the other she held the door shut. She leaned against the glass door as Edie started to bang on it. Let me in, Ruthy, let me in, please. Oh, Ruthy!

I can't. Please, Edie, I just can't.

Edie's eyes rolled fearfully towards the walking dog. It's coming. Oh, Ruthy, please, please.

No! No! said Ruthy.

The dog stopped right in front of the stoop to hear the screaming and banging. Edie's heart stopped too. But in a minute he decided to go on. He passed. He continued his easy steady pace.

When Ruthy's big sister came down to call them for lunch, the two girls were crying. They came hugging each other and their hair was a mess. You two are nuts, she said. If I was Mama, I wouldn't let you play together so much every single day. I mean it.

MANY YEARS LATER in Manhattan it was Ruthy's fiftieth birthday. She had invited three friends. They waited for her at the round kitchen table. She had been constructing several pies so that this birthday could be celebrated in her kitchen during the day by any gathered group without too much trouble. Now and then one of the friends would say, Will you sit down, for godsakes! She would sit immediately. But in the middle of someone's sentence or even one of her own, she'd jump up with a look of worry beyond household affairs to wash a cooking utensil or wipe crumbs of flour off the Formica counter.

Edie was one of the women at the table. She was sewing, by neat hand, a new zipper into an old dress. She said, Ruthy, it wasn't like that. We both ran in and out a lot.

No, said Ruth. You would never have locked me out. You were an awful sissy, sweetie, but you would never, never have locked me out. Just look at yourself. Look at your life!

Edie glanced, as people will, when told to do that. She saw a chubby dark-haired woman who looked like a nice short teacher, someone who stood at the front of the schoolroom and said, History is a wonderful subject. It's all stories. It's where we come from, who we are. For instance, where do you come from, Juan? Where do your parents and grandparents come from?

You know that, Mizz Seiden. Porto Rico. You know that a long-o time-o, Juan said, probably in order to mock both languages. Oh, to whom would he speak?

For Christsakes, this is a party, isn't it? said Ann. She was patting a couple of small cases and a projector on the floor next to her chair. Was she about to offer a slide show? No, she had already been prevented from doing this by Faith, who'd looked at the clock two or three times and said, I don't have the time, Jack is coming tonight. Ruth had looked at the clock too. Next week, Ann? Ann said OK OK. But Ruthy, I want to say you have to quit knocking yourself. I've seen you do a million good things. If you were such a dud, why'd I write it down in my will that if anything happened to me, you and Joe were the ones who'd raise my kids.

You were just plain wrong. I couldn't even raise my own right.

Ruthy, really, they're pretty much raised. Anyway, how can you say an awful thing like that? Edie asked. They're wonderful beautiful brilliant girls. Edie knew this because she had held them in her arms the third or fourth day of life, and in the friendliness of years, she had become the one called aunt.

That's true, I don't have to worry about Sara anymore, I guess.

Why? Because she's a married mommy? Faith asked. What an insult to Edie!

No, that's OK, said Edie.

Well, I do worry about Rachel. I just can't help myself. I never know where she is. She was supposed to be here last night. She does usually call. Where the hell is she?

Oh, probably in jail for some stupid little sit-in or something, Ann said. She'll get out in five minutes. Why she thinks that kind of thing works is a mystery to me. You brought her up like that and now you're surprised. Besides which, I don't want to talk about the goddamn kids, said Ann. Here I've gone around half of most of the nearly socialist world and nobody asks me a single question. I have been a witness of events! she shouted.

I do want to hear everything, said Ruth. Then she changed her mind. Well, I don't mean everything. Just say one good thing and one bad thing about every place you've been. We only have a couple of hours. (It was four o'clock. At six, Sara and Tomas with Letty, the first grandchild, standing between them would be at the door. Letty would probably think it was her own birthday party. Someone would say, What curly hair! They would all love her new shoes and her newest sentence, which was Remember dat? Because for such a long time there had been only the present full of milk and looking. Then one day, trying to dream into an afternoon nap, she sat up and said, Gramma, I boke your cup. Remember dat? In this simple way the lifelong past is invented, which, as we know, thickens the present and gives all kinds of advice to the future.) So, Ann, I mean just a couple of things about each country.

That's not much of a discussion, for Christsake.

It's a party, Ann, you said it yourself.

Well, change your face, then.

Oh. Ruth touched her mouth, the corners of her eyes. You're right. Birthday! she said.

Well, let's go, then, said Ann. She stated two good things and one bad thing about Chile (an earlier visit), Rhodesia, the Soviet Union, and Portugal.

You forgot about China. Why don't you tell them about our trip to China?

I don't think I will, Ruthy; you'd only contradict every word I say.

Edie, the oldest friend, stripped a nice freckled banana she'd been watching during Ann's talk. The thing is, Ruth, you never simply say yes. I've told you so many times, *I* would have slammed the door on you, admit it, but it was your house, and that slowed me down.

Property, Ann said. Even among poor people, it begins early.

Poor? asked Edie. It was the Depression.

Two questions — Faith believed she'd listened patiently long enough. I love that story, but I've heard it before. Whenever you're down in the dumps. Ruthy. Right?

I haven't, said Ann. How come, Ruthy? Also will you please sit with us.

The second question: What about this city? I mean, I'm sick of these big international reports. Look at this place, looks like a toxic waste dump. A war. Nine million people.

Oh, that's true, Edie said, but Faith, the whole thing *is* hopeless. Top to bottom, the streets, those kids, dumped, plain

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dumped. That's the correct word, 'dumped'. She began to cry.

Cut it out, Ann shouted. No tears, Edie! No! Stop this minute! I swear, Faith said, you'd better stop that! (They were all, even Edie, ideologically, spiritually, and on puritanical principle against despair.)

Faith was sorry to have mentioned the city in Edie's presence. If you said the word 'city' to Edie, or even the cool adjective 'municipal', specific children usually sitting at the back of the room appeared before her eyes and refused to answer when she called on them. So Faith said, OK. New subject: What do you women think of the grand juries they're calling up all over the place?

All over what place? Edie asked. Oh, Faith, forget it, they're going through something. You know you three lead such adversarial lives. I hate it. What good does it do? Anyway, those juries will pass.

Edie, sometimes I think you're half asleep. You know that woman in New Haven who was called? I know her personally. She wouldn't say a word. She's in jail. They're not kidding.

I'd never open my mouth either, said Ann. Never.

She clamped her mouth shut then and there.

I believe you, Ann. But sometimes, Ruth said, I think, Suppose I was in Argentina and they had my kid. God, if they had our Sara's Letty, I'd maybe say anything.

Oh, Ruth, you've held up pretty well, once or twice, Faith said.

Yes, Ann said, in fact we were all pretty good that day, we were sitting right up against the horses' knees at the draft board — were you there, Edie? And then the goddamn horses started to rear and the cops were knocking people on their backs and heads — remember? And, Ruthy, I was watching you. You just suddenly plowed in and out of those monsters. You should have been trampled to death. And you grabbed the captain by his gold buttons and you hollered, You bastard! Get your goddamn cavalry out of here. You shook him and shook him.

He ordered them, Ruth said. She set one of her birthday cakes, which was an apple plum pie, on the table. I saw him. He was the responsible person. I saw the whole damn operation. I'd begun to run — the horses — but I turned because I was the one supposed to be in front and I saw him give the order. I've never honestly been so angry.

Ann smiled. Anger, she said. That's really good.

You think so? Ruth asked. You sure?

Buzz off, said Ann.

Ruth lit the candles. Come on, Ann, we've got to blow this out together. And make a wish. I don't have the wind I used to have.

But you're still full of hot air, Edie said. And kissed her hard. What did you wish, Ruthy? she asked.

Well, a wish, some wish, Ruth said. Well, I wished that this wouldn't end. This world, this world, Ruth said softly.

Me too, I wished exactly the same. Taking action, Ann hoisted herself up onto a kitchen chair, saying, ugh, my back; ouch, my knee; then: Let us go forth with fear and courage and rage to save the world.

Bravo, Edie said softly.

Wait a minute, said Faith . . .

Ann said, Oh, you . . . you . . .

But it was six o'clock and the doorbell rang. Sara and Tomas stood on either side of Letty, who was hopping or wriggling with excitement, hiding behind her mother's long skirt or grabbing her father's thigh. The door had barely opened when Letty jumped forward to hug Ruth's knees. I'm gonna sleep in your house, Gramma.

I know, darling, I know.

Gramma, I slept in your bed with you. Remember dat?

Oh sure, darling, I remember. We woke up around five and it was still dark and I looked at you and you looked at me and you had a great big Letty smile and we burst out laughing and you laughed and I laughed.

I remember dat, Gramma. Letty looked at her parents with shyness and pride. She was still happy to have found the word 'remember', which could name so many pictures in her head.

And then we went right back to sleep, Ruth said, kneeling now to Letty's height to kiss her little face.

Where's my Aunt Rachel? Letty asked, hunting among the crowd of unfamiliar legs in the hallway.

I don't know.

She's supposed to be here, Letty said. Mommy, you promised. She's really supposed.

Yes, said Ruth, picking Letty up to hug her and then hug her again. Letty, she said as lightly as she could, She *is* supposed to be here. But where can she be? She certainly is supposed.

Letty began to squirm out of Ruth's arms. Mommy, she called, Gramma is squeezing. But it seemed to Ruth that she'd better hold her even closer, because, though no one else seemed to notice — Letty, rosy and soft-cheeked as ever, was falling, already falling, falling out of her brand-new hammock of world-inventing words onto the hard floor of man-made time. □

‘ Ruth lit the candles. Come on, Ann, we've got to blow this out together. And make a wish. I don't have the wind I used to have. But you're still full of hot air, Edie said. And kissed her hard. What did you wish, Ruthy? she asked. ’

Later the Same Day, *the collection of Grace Paley's stories from which this is taken, will be published by Virago on 7 November.*

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The last party

Rupert Christiansen

The New Review Anthology
ed. IAN HAMILTON *Heinemann* £12.95

THE NEW REVIEW ANTHOLOGY is the sort of book that ought to be sealed in a capsule and buried in the earth for a thousand years, indelibly labelled 'THE MID-1970s'. It already summons up memories of a bygone age in an almost shocking way — what was there to worry about then, in those happy aimless days when the talk was of pluralism rather than monetarism, before Brixton, Tebbit and Cruise? What was happening anyway in those five years between the three-day-week of 1974 and Thatcher's victory in 1979 — the period in which the publication of *The New Review* so neatly falls?

For those who don't remember — and the traumas of Thatcherism have made memories short — *The New Review* will serve as a prompt. It was without doubt the best-looking monthly of its time, slim, but as broad and as tall as a telephone directory, with a strikingly elegant black cover (it is a pity that the anthology cover could not have incorporated more of the style). Its good looks did not altogether work in its favour, inasmuch as they made it an easy target for accusations of coffee-table extravagance. And *The New Review* did have access to money, in the form of Arts Council 'generosity' at a time when it maintained some sort of commitment to new writing. In fact, the sniping on this score became so widespread that an editorial had to explain that the magazine was not 'rich when all around it are abjectly poor', since the subsidy wasn't really a subsidy at all, only a 'prop' or 'support'.

The trouble with this defence was that the contents often seemed to body forth the surface gloss rather than any profounder sense of purpose. I can remember as an undergraduate having to leaf through copies surreptitiously at the newsagents: my Trotskyite college JCR refused to subscribe, on the grounds of its pretentious triviality, and to have bought it would have branded me as an aspirant to the ranks of the glitterati. All very unfair, no doubt, but then *The New Review* manner was not apologetic.

Its editor was Ian Hamilton, who had played himself in during the Sixties with a 'little' poetry quarterly *The Review*, which he ran from Oxford with considerable success. *The New Review* was not 'little'; it was not even 'literary', being quite prepared to tackle larger cultural and political issues. It was, above all, aggressively sophisticated, rejecting the determined provincialism of *Scrutiny* and its imitators and, instead, making itself firmly metropolitan.

Its office was in Soho's Greek Street and the most prominent contributors were television and Sunday newspaper figures such as Clive James and Melvyn Bragg, rather than recherché young academics. This could lead to a distinctly middlebrow air. In the first issue, for instance, there was an interview with Angus Wilson by Jonathan Raban, a short story by Edna O'Brien, Clive James on Nigel Balchin, Melvyn Bragg on interviewing Norman Mailer, and George Steiner summing up the current state of English intellectual life as 'the new acidity' (a phrase which mercifully did not catch on). Later issues starred an ABC of the novels of Anthony Powell and Bragg interviewing Robert Redford about *All the President's Men*, with a nadir of inventiveness being reached when Ian Hamilton interviewed one of his chief interviewers — yes, none other than the ubiquitous Melvyn Bragg.

Hamilton also contributed studies of *The New Review*'s predecessors, which he later developed into a book. Describing Cyril Connolly's *Horizon* in one of these, he remarked that 'the whole thing was exquisitely non-committal, exhibiting all the received names that readers would have been used to seeing in any one of the several annuals and miscellanies that were appearing at the time'. For annuals and miscellanies, read BBC programmes, and you have a picture of *The New Review* at its worst.

But perhaps it wasn't so much non-committal as understandably confused. It knew that the blithe moral confidence of Sixties radical chic was a dead or dying letter and that knee-jerk anti-Communism of the *Encounter* variety was no alternative. But, beyond that, where could that vague feeling of crisis be pinpointed? What should liberal literary folk be getting upset about?

There was terrorism, of course, and *The New Review* printed a stomach-churning piece by a victim of the South Moluccans' train seige. Michael Malik's trial was reported and R.D. Laing was pitched against Thomas Szasz in some bitter exchanges over schizophrenia. There was a rumpus-causing cover photograph of a cheerfully naked Hockney and Kitaj, some vigorous support for Public Lending Right and an exposé of the way in which the BBC were destroying tapes of important television drama. But — and this is not a criticism of editorial policy, so much as a comment on the intellectual climate — there were no clear and central lines of debate of the sort recently maintained by the *London Review of Books* over the miners' strike and the sinking of the Belgrano.

The anthology gives little impression of this side of the magazine and, like most books of its kind, concentrates on picking out some literary plums for the bedside table. Without communicating much of the flavour or variety of a typical issue, it certainly provides a wealth of fresh and bold young writing. There is poetry by James Fenton and Andrew Motion; the short story 'Solid Geometry', still perhaps Ian McEwan's most potent piece of fiction; a delightful satire by Jim Crace, which hovers

Images of the Seventies as captured by covers of The New Review

the new review
HUGH TREVOR-ROPER/DEVOLUTION ☐ ROBERT LOWELL/THREE POEMS
PAUL THEROUX/THE GREENEST ISLAND ☐ HANS KELLER/FAMILY LIFE
SIMON GRAY – AN INTERVIEW ☐ NADINE GORDIMER/A NEW STORY
DAVID HOCKNEY IN CONVERSATION WITH R. B. KITAJ
A DOUBLE ISSUE
the new
RICHARD
THE STAR-SPA
SWEET DREAMS, BABY!

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between Kerouac and Hunter S. Thompson, and truer tales of the road from Hugo Williams. It is also good to have James Fox's authoritative account of the Lucan case and Lorna Sage's telling conversation with Angela Carter. Inevitably, there are some duds too. Hamilton is an admirer of Robert Lowell, who is not creditably represented by a drippingly epigrammatic and overwritten tribute to John Crowe Ransom. A witless little concoction about the sex war by Martin Amis should have been allowed an early death and Clive James's smarmy interview with Amis *père*, 'pre-eminently the *theme* novelist of his generation', is exactly the kind of boozy-lunch affair that made *The New Review* such an object of suspicion.

Other pieces lose out of context: John Carey's 'Down with Dons', an ambivalent swipe at Maurice Bowra and his claret-bibbing, Pindar-quoting camp followers, needs its original accompanying photograph and the subsequent memorable correspondence to make its full effect. And I can't help wishing that room had been found for some of the extended book reviews, which were often first-rate. I remember a magisterial elucidation by E. S. Shaffer of Harold Bloom's exegetical principles that was like the sun pouring down on a murky landscape.

The New Review fizzled out in penury in 1979, after a decent five years' innings. Thatcherism brought forth a new set of responses, not least economic ones. It is significant that three of the magazine's replacements, *Quarto, The Literary Review* and the *London Review of Books*, all of which appeared in October 1979, were printed (then at least) on cheap newspaper and cushioned by private munificence rather than public subsidy. The *London Review of Books** is edited by *The New Review*'s associate editor Karl Miller and its opening manifesto immediately identified with 'the fortunes and prospects of the social-democratic left' (which is generally taken to mean the Alliance). *The New Review* felt no need for any such avowal, for in 1974 pluralism could still be assumed. In 1979 the question 'under which king, Bezonian?' became inescapable.

Like *Scrutiny*, like *Partisan Review*, like *Horizon, The New Review* was more than just a repository of good writing. It was also a sensitive historical indicator, reflecting the last party before, to adapt Cyril Connolly, that long drawn-out closing time in the gardens of the West. This very enjoyable anthology does not do its significance full justice. □

*London Reviews: A Selection from the London Review of Books 1983-85, *introduced by Karl Miller and edited by Nicholas Spice, is also published this week by Chatto in paperback at £5.95.*

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Gregory Woods

Towards Democracy
EDWARD CARPENTER *GMP* £17.50 & £5.95

'IN 1883 HE became a Socialist and wrote *Towards Democracy*.' This oddly dramatic account of the genesis of Carpenter's book (from the Everyman *Dictionary of Literary Biography*) overlooks the fact that its four sections were published in 1883, 1885, 1892 and 1902. The whole work, a massive millennarian sequence of poems, was the product not of sudden conversion but of a life-style conscientiously developed over decades.

Of course, Carpenter is easy to dismiss. His political vision, expressed in terms more of joy than of economics, shrugs off the practical details of how a state should be run: 'Stronger than all the combinations of Capital, wiser than all the committees representative of Labor, the simple need and hunger of the human heart./Nothing more is needed.' And these opinions are stated in poems which, at their worst, sound like a fumbling intercourse between Whitman and McGonagall.

The book's mood ranges from gentle prettifications of the British landscape and people to the kind of choking fury that reappears later in D.H. Lawrence. When Carpenter calls England 'a dead waste of aimless abject closeshaven shabby simpering flat pompous peaked punctilious faces', we have to agree with Emile Delavenay's argument (largely based on circumstantial evidence) that this is one of Lawrence's main sources.

In addition to his ideological beard and tan, Carpenter shares with Lawrence a tendency to become so involved in what he wants to say, rather than in how he wants to say it, that only enthusiasm is left to save him from his frequently deficient diction. But there is no point in sneering when, for example, he says life is 'a mere empty blob without Freedom'. The phrase is ridiculous, but perfectly expressive of a ridiculous condition.

This apparent lack of sophistication can be a real virtue. I believe that 'A Mightier than Mammon', which is a folly built on errors and contains some of the sloppiest writing in the book, is, nevertheless, outstanding among English political poems. This is partly because its message takes precedence over its rhetoric, leaving the reader with an uncommon impression of sincerity.

It is also because the message, although simple and obvious, is as devastating a threat — and as radical a solution — to the condition of British society (then and now) as is the idea it complements, that the workers of the world should unite. Without new attitudes to sex, particularly to contraception and homosexuality, the redistribution of capital can have only superficial effects on the structure of society. Socialism depends on the realignment of the sexes.

Our century has not necessarily eased the process. When Carpenter personifies Democracy as a male lover poised to impregnate the female nation with freedom, the idea is not as sexist as it sounds: he assumes we can imagine a phallus potent not with power and lust, but humility and love. This requires a suspension of both sexual and political belief. After all, women and men alike, we under Thatcher have a very different impression of how it feels to be fucked by Democracy.

That the published ideas of a Victorian ex-clergyman could be so far in advance of our own times is worth remembering. *Towards Democracy* really earns its status as a Gay Modern Classic; but, like so many gay classics, it addresses itself as eloquently to the heterosexual hegemony as to those of us who are gay. In the end, it is to all of us that Carpenter directs his totally convincing view of Britain: 'I see a great land waiting for its own people to come and take possession of it.' □

FICTION

Mother care

Colin Greenland

Men and Angels
MARY GORDON *Cape* £8.95
Fortune's Daughter
ALICE HOFFMAN *Collins Harvill* £9.95
Not Wanted on the Voyage
TIMOTHY FINDLEY *Macmillan* £9.95
Seaview
TOBY OLSON *Marion Boyars* £9.95
The Untidy Pilgrim
EUGENE WALTER *Methuen* £9.50 & £3.95
The Byzantine Riddle
EUGENE WALTER *Methuen* £8.95 & £3.50

DURING THE unprecedented absence of her husband Michael, on an exchange year in France, Anne Foster is to write the catalogue for a New York exhibition. For their children she reluctantly engages an au pair, the mutely menacing Laura Post, who, we learn, to compensate for her own hellish upbringing, has decided she is the elect of the Lord, though she is keeping it a secret for the moment. 'Wise as serpents and innocent as doves.' The children take to her, this evangelical time-bomb, while their infuriatingly sensitive mother frets and frays and pulls her life apart at the seams, in Mary Gordon's **Men and Angels**. Laura's violent spasm of righteousness, when it finally comes, is implausible, inconsistent, *un*evangelical, proving her less sinister, more silly, than was promised. Did Gordon lose her nerve? She has a keen sense of trauma and a flair for quirky similes. All her minor characters are much sparkier; only the two major ones are so tiresome.

'It's my ruling passion, maternity,' says Anne Foster. The two leading women in **Fortune's Daughter** are similarly ruled; though unlike Mary Gordon, Alice Hoffman does not open them up to minute scrutiny. Instead they remain opaque, unaccountable, while their passion rolls and pulses through the landscape. Rae Perry is uprooted from Boston by her vile

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and feckless boyfriend and more-or-less abandoned, pregnant, in LA. Rae turns to Lila Grey, a 'psychic consultant' she met reading tea leaves in a restaurant. Lila, disturbed by omens of death, goes east on an obsessive quest for her own child, forced into adoption at birth 25 years ago and not seen since. Rae, needing Lila, struggles on and grows strong. Their tale is aglow with natural magic, with a profound Jewish faith in the mysteries of fecundity. Hoffman's sentimentality is inexhaustible, but she observes clearly the cruelties people inflict on one another in and out of love, and the work of endurance. In her world nothing happens because it is deserved, only because it is achieved — though there might always be a miracle.

Both Gordon and Hoffman tell stories of mothers alone. The various fathers are all out of it, intentionally or involuntarily dissociated from their partners. Timothy Findley makes an issue of this. Mothers, with their blend of fructifying mana and common sense, could save the world, if it weren't for fathers. **Not Wanted on the Voyage**, a fabulation about Noah's Ark, complains loud and long on behalf of Mrs Noyes, the downtrodden soul of sympathy and care, against Dr Noah Noyes, a tyrant, hypocrite, lecher, boor and far too free with the sacrificial knife. If Findley had concentrated half as hard on his moral and twice as hard on his plot, he might have produced something glorious. Instead it resembles a bizarre collaboration between Tom Robbins and David Kossoff, hopelessly overpopulated with important roles — eight family members, assorted talking cats, crows, sheep, ring-tailed lemurs, dragons, unicorns, angels and fairies — without space to develop. Somewhere in there is the book's most wonderful image, of the Lord Yaweh as a petulant, arthritic showman in decline, travelling with a shabby menagerie and a cadre of thuggish seraphim. His coach has been battered and pelted with refuse by the unfaithful. It is smelly and full of flies.

Melinda and Allen are a young couple driving cross-country from California to Cape Cod, where Melinda was born. It is her last journey: she is dying of cancer. En route Allen makes money hustling at golf, which he plays with supreme zen clarity. He also has two matchboxes of cocaine to deliver for Richard, an old associate. When something goes badly wrong with the first drop, in Tombstone, Allen ducks out of the deal. Richard sets off after him with a gun. Meanwhile Melinda and Allen have picked up a chance companion, Bob White, a pensive and courteous Pima Indian in his fifties, who does not tell them he too is on a mission. **Seaview** is the golf course, built in 1892 on Pamet Indian land, where they all end up, together with sundry Seaview officials and local inhabitants, government agents and bikers, for a complicated showdown 'on the edge of America'. This, one might feel, would be quite enough for one book: an intelligent thriller, ideally, with plenty of resonant themes in play among the plotting and hunting. However, Toby Olson, who teaches English Literature at Temple University, Pennsylvania, felt called to add intermittent mystifications and fugues of oblique or experimental prose, which hammer a humane and vital story into symbolic flatness. *Seaview* was awarded the 1983 PEN/Faulkner Award for American Fiction. Obstinately, I remain dissatisfied.

Eugene Walter's **The Untidy Pilgrim** won him the Lippincott Fiction Award in 1954. Methuen have reissued it, simultaneously publishing **The Byzantine Riddle**, a more recent collection of short stories like shards and reflections of the novel, even down to exact repetitions of favourite phrases. Walter's sensibility is a baroque and benevolent aestheticism, his milieu idle days in Alabama. Some of the stories make a wistful kind of point; *The Untidy Pilgrim*, though, is pure pastoral, dalliance beneath the cowcumber magnolia, love and leisure mediated by wit (and supported by proud Negro Servants): '*Eclatez* with the fireworks and blossom with the rose, that's *my* message to the numbered and cubbyholed.' □

Truth & justice

Sara Maitland

Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form
MARINA WARNER *Weidenfeld* £16.95

NEARLY TEN YEARS AGO I was asked to review Marina Warner's *Alone of All her Sex: the Myth and Cult of the Virgin Mary* (Weidenfeld, 1976) — a history of the representation of Jesus's mother in Western art. Reading it was a crucial experience for me; quite simply it exploded the boundaries of feminist scholarship. Apart from offering the consoling possibility that the sort of education I had had did not have to be thrown away wholesale, it also traced a path of socialist feminist critical appreciation which meant new openings and ways for me — and it did so without sacrificing either accessibility or loveliness of writing. Over the last decade my admiration of the book, and of Warner's 1981 work on Joan of Arc, has grown; luckily, so has my acquaintance with the author. I mention these facts because I want to make clear that I am a highly prejudiced reviewer, already steadily influenced by Warner's work and convinced that it offers us all something important.

In *Monuments and Maidens* Warner has chosen to address a slightly trying and tricky social question: Why, given the generally low esteem in which individual women and the state of femaleness are held in Western culture, are so many dearly valued *public* ideals continually personified, allegorised, represented, in female form: Liberty, Justice (with her scales), the graces, the virtues, the city, the homeland (particularly in victory) and naked truth herself. This phenomenon vexed the classical writers too, encumbered as they were by the fact that most abstract nouns of quality were grammatically feminine and that the writers could not apparently resist the lure of allegorisation. They rationalised, as Warner shows in a rather splendid series of quotes, both desperately and determinedly:

In the *TLS* on November 1

IRELAND

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> Indeed all the virtues have women's titles, but powers and activities of consummate men. For that which comes after God even though it may be the highest of all other things, occupies a second place, and therefore was termed feminine to express its contrast with the Maker of the universe who is masculine... For pre-eminence always pertains to the masculine and the feminine always comes short of it.

The point here is not simply that it *did* vex the ancients, but that the representation of women continues to vex us all — allegory is not dead, it lives openly in New York Harbour, in the streets and museums of Europe and even explains the hold that our Prime Minister has, via the media, over our hearts, minds and votes.

So Warner goes hunting and what a fabulous hunt it is, worthy of any mediaeval tapestry, high and low, through classical mythology — particularly the poignant and many faceted figure of Athena, she who was born from her father's head without apparent benefit, or need, of maternity; through the biblical texts, where the mysterious Sophia, the wisdom of God, dances alongside such dangerous, virtuous women as Judith, who dressed herself as a whore to perform the final act of civic virtue; through the writings of 12th-century mystics and the sculptings of French revolutionary artists; through the thinkings of contemporary feminists, Warner strides — like the classical goddess of the hunt, above all things and into all things. And she arrives at a sad conclusion:

> It is because women continue to occupy the space of the Other that they lend themselves to allegorical use so well...we would fail to respond to the symbolic content of such images as Delacroix's *Liberty* if we perceived her as an individual person. If women had a vote or a voice, Marianne would have been harder to accept as an individual figure of the ideal.

It is a wonderful book, a treasure trove of information and insight; nonetheless I rather doubt it will have the success that *Alone of All her Sex* or *Joan of Arc* did. There is almost too much here. Almost everyone carries somewhere inside them an image, baffling in its contours, of Mary or Joan the Maid that gave these books a clear and personal focus. This time, the monumental (in quantity as well as statuary) allegories are less focused; at least at a preliminary reading one comes away not with the argument intact, but with tastes of delight and regret — I must read Hildegard of Bingen myself, and I wish my Latin was up to Ovid in the original. This is a pity really because Warner for the first time seems to be open about an explicit commitment to feminism, even if it is a slightly reluctant one. In a curiously touching passage she writes of Christine de Pizan, a 15th-century writer:

> Her voice is defensive and insistent and foreshadows the modern artist's predicament, alienated from the consensus of the world, who attempts from within to generate a world view that will shake that consensus, but finds she cannot plead as she might.

This extraordinary *tour de force* ends with a passionate lyric in praise of the new 'sensibility' of the women's movement — though not quite so named. Although clearly located in history and resisting valiantly the lure of the allegorical personification, Warner so almost reifies this collective voice that one is on tenterhooks. I rejoice that she prevails, grammatically, and rejoice too that the temptation is so strong. She has persuaded us, lovingly and exhaustively, of the power of these tropes; it is satisfactory that she demonstrates her own power to resist them.

I think this is an amazing book, both in the coherence of its argument and in the intimacy of its detail. I wish I was so learned, I am glad that someone is. What more can I say? □

CHIC PIX
THE
CONSUMER
CATASTROPHE
A
FEMINIST VIEW
CHIC PIX
at the ICA
and Compendium
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I WALKED
WITH A
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___ I FOUND OUT ___

A kind of glass

Nicholas Murray

Jonathan Swift: A Hypocrite Reversed
DAVID NOKES *Oxford* £14.95

LIKE A TEEMING Lilliputian army, critics and biographers have swarmed over the pegged-out corpse of Jonathan Swift in the two and a half centuries since his death. The post-war period in particular has seen a renewed campaign of critical inquiry into all sorts of details about the late Dean and David Nokes, in this thoroughly readable and intelligent biography, has set himself the task of producing a new synthesis as well as trying to 're-establish the balance between his public and private lives'.

The Swift who emerges from this judicious summing-up is not radically at odds with the spiky misanthrope of tradition who delighted to represent himself as a shocker — 'I hate and detest that animal called man' — cherishing the cynical maxims of La Rochefoucauld which exposed the human animal as goaded solely by self interest. Nokes's deft adjustments to the legend present also 'the essential honesty and humanity that made him prefer to seem a monster rather than a hypocrite'. It was a desire to strip off the masks of deceit that made him so savagely indignant and such a hater of hypocrisy that Bolingbroke called him 'a hypocrite reversed'.

As is often the case with the intellectual misanthrope, Swift could be — before the deafness, giddiness and later mental confusion which made his last years so utterly wretched — pleasant company, as his friends would testify. Like his fellow Dubliner, James Joyce, he was a terrible man for the puns and attracted a succession of young women with his playful presence and witty logomachy. Two in particular, the dutiful Stella and the more spirited and self-willed Vanessa, submitted to the strange, de-sexed master and pupil relationships on which he insisted. Throughout his life he resisted any kind of emotional demand and the later scatological poems, with their disturbing insistence on the defecatory habits of women ('Celia shits'), implied an equation of women with the Yahoos.

Denied the preferment which came so easily to friends like Addison, Swift spent most of his life in the vain pursuit of the political and ecclesiastical success he felt was due to him. His frequent censoring of the spirit of party was less a proud independence of mind than a canny reservation of his freedom to attach himself to whichever faction was in the ascendant. Nokes is good on the Whig and Tory shenanigans through which Swift wove and concludes that: 'It was disappointment which made Swift a radical.' Forced back to his native Ireland and the lesser position of Dean of St Patrick's, he continued to pour out the satires, pamphlets and political propaganda which are his finest achievement. The *Drapier Letters* made him famous in Ireland as a patriot and defender of national liberties, though the love Ireland bore him was returned ambiguously. The Irish were 'worse than toads' and although he championed the cause of the economically oppressed and excoriated the absentee English landlords who created their misery, his social attitudes towards the individual poor were harsh and punitive, the crustiest of Tory.

For a clergyman Swift had very little to say about God and, as Nokes shows, his sermons embodied 'a narrow and shallow orthodoxy'. His best energies were engaged in the here and now, in a secular rage against human folly which fuelled the most powerful and richly ironic satires in the language and which went far to justify (though Catholics, dissenters and others might demur) his self-inscribed epitaph in St Patrick's cathedral in Dublin: 'Go, traveller, and imitate if you can one who strove with all his might to champion liberty.' □

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Shorter reviews

The Export of Hazard
ed. JANE H. IVES *Routledge* £14.95

If you think life in Britain is risky, imagine what happens when the hazard-makers, from drug companies to oil refiners, get going globally. This book is an attempt to find out whether international action can make the world safer by forcing dangerous industries, whether they produce inflammable baby clothes or pesticides, to raise standards worldwide and stop taking advantage of the lower conditions they can get away with in poorer countries without well-developed health and safety systems.

The signs are ominous. The far from draconian system set up in the US to impose safety standards on exporters was one of the first good ideas signed out of existence when Reagan got to the White House. Even a feeble scheme to alert countries to the hazards of the goods they import is unimplemented because of the fear that it could harm US exports. Efforts by international bodies to impose world safety standards are proceeding at the usual ice-bound pace. Multinationals, even in developed countries like Italy, site of the Seveso disaster, can get away with catastrophically unsafe ways of working.

The Export of Hazard points out the size of the problem and the inadequacy of the response. But it does not abandon hope entirely. For one thing, there is an increasing realisation that exported hazards get reimported, in the form of unsafe goods, polluted food or reshipped chemicals. Like the polluted Seveso soil which toured Europe in trucks looking for a final resting place, hazards cannot be pinned down. It is also likely that the Bhopal disaster (which Ives's book is recent enough to take on board) will cause a major re-examination of the double standards used by international companies. But the odds against efforts to control major polluters internationally are even more immense than in a single country. The problem is still set to grow rather than go away.

Martin Ince

The Complete Shorter Fiction of Virginia Woolf
ed. SUSAN DICK *Hogarth Press* £12.95

Virginia Woolf's shorter fiction is collected here for the first time in a single volume. Alongside 'Kew Gardens' or 'The Mark on the Wall' there are unrevised sketches written just for amusement, early work rehashed for *Harpers* ('Oh the bore of writing out a story for money!'), or experiments in narrative technique. Such incongruities will not disconcert those who see *all* her books as literary albums linking her to the Victorians and their urge to record as much as to the moderns and their need to create.

A group of stories set at Mrs Dalloway's party (which seems to have carried on after the novel) is a brilliant exploration of the 'party-consciousness'. Guests experience both a longing to mingle and be taken out of themselves and a desire to be left alone; Mabel Waring, in 'The New Dress', reflects that a party either makes things much more real or much less so. Such dilemmas haunted the author, as did the question of what lay 'beyond that shell of a person which is seen by other people'.

The pleasure in reading this volume is one of intensity rather than duration. After some lumpy, inert stories one reaches 'The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection'. Here the narrator, in a quiet country room, sees a reflection of Isabella Tyson in her summer dress and carrying a basket until she vanishes 'sliced off by the gilt rim of the looking-glass'. Isabella returns from the garden and finds letters on the hall table which she does not open. Within this slight plot an entire life is evoked to illustrate the disturbing idea that 'a life' might be a fiction.

Virgina Woolf's own legendary, wraith-like figure is absent from the book. Did her determination to write perfectly leave insufficient time for reflection and self-knowledge? Or was it a deliberate choice? 'It is curious,' she wrote, 'how one protects the image of oneself from idolatry or any other handling that could make it ridiculous.'

Alan Hurst

Churchill and the Jews
MICHAEL J. COHEN *Frank Cass* £22.50

Michael Cohen's book addresses the problem: how was it that Churchill was regarded throughout his life as a friend of the Jews, when his record during the Jewish catastrophe was so poor? The argument that he was repeatedly thwarted by the pro-Arab Foreign Office does not hold up, as Cohen demonstrates.

Churchill claimed in 1946: 'I had no idea, when the war came to an end, of the horrible massacres which had occurred.' But as early as 17 December 1942 Anthony Eden had made a statement to the Commons deploring Germany's 'bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination'. In July 1944, when the scale of the killings at Auschwitz became known, Churchill wrote to Eden that the Final Solution was 'probably the greatest and most horrible crime in the whole history of the world'. The trouble is that he liked making grandiose statements: it didn't mean that he intended to do anything about it.

On 7 July 1944, Churchill asked Eden to arrange for the bombing of Auschwitz. But, as he must have known, a single brief memo is hardly enough to make something happen in the teeth of predictable opposition from the Forces and the Foreign Office. Allied bombers attacked the synthetic oil plant near Auschwitz at that time, accidentally dropping bombs on the camp, but, officially, bombing the camp was said to be logistically impossible. Churchill apparently never enquired after the fate of his memo to Eden.

Michael Cohen complains in his Foreword of the handicap imposed by the extended closure of the Churchill archives and is critical of the way that Churchill's reputation has been so sedulously defended. This book demonstrates that, whatever else he might have been, Churchill was not an active gentile Zionist.

Peter Forbes

Don't Be a Soldier: The Radical Anti-War Movement in North London 1914-18
KEN WELLER *Journeyman* £3.25

Ken Weller's book documents a fascinating fragment of North London socialist history, linking the local anti-war struggle of 1914-18 to the wider national agitation and personalities of that era.

With the war effort being supported by the Labour Party, the TUC and even the ostensibly revolutionary British Socialist Party, much of the anti-war militancy was organised through the Herald Leagues — local branches of sellers and supporters of the left-wing newspaper, *The Daily Herald*, edited by George Lansbury.

In North London, despite orchestrated attacks by patriotic mobs, the League held frequent, vast anti-war demonstrations addressed by speakers such as Sylvia Pankhurst and Harry Pollitt. As a result, local membership jumped from 50 to several hundred in a matter of months, most new members being working-class men and women from a 'libertarian anti-parliamentarian rebel milieu'.

Nationwide, the anti-war movement persuaded 16,000 men to refuse conscription and inspired thousands of others to participate in the emergent soldiers' unions.

These successes prompted severe government repression. Police spies, mail interception and telephone tapping became commonplace. Many anti-war activists were imprisoned under the Sedition laws and the Defence of the Realm Act which, among other things, made soldiers' wives subject to police supervision and curfew. In South Wales, five wives caught outdoors after hours were court-martialed and gaoled for nine weeks. Others were deemed 'unworthy' and had their dependants' allowance withdrawn. Such was the climate of jingoism that some women were sentenced to hard labour for the newly-created criminal offence of infecting members of His Majesty's armed forces with venereal diseases.

A microcosm of early socialist and anti-war politics, *Don't Be a Soldier* provides a valuable insight into the multitude of diverse organisations and ideological traditions which gave birth to the modern Labour Movement. By showing that the success of the Herald Leagues lay in uniting a broad alliance of radicals — socialists, union militants, Christians, anarchists and suffragettes — and in putting the emphasis on political action rather than ideological purity, Ken Weller's book has a continuing relevance to the Left today.

Peter Tatchell

Can we live without enemies?
DOROTHY ROWE
Living with the Bomb
The Human race is facing extinction not merely from nuclear war but also from the destruction of the resources of the planet. Is it possible for us to change? To organise a peaceful, sharing society? To live in a world without enemies? Dorothy Rowe outlines the painful process of change we will all have to undertake to secure the continuation of the human race.
0 7102 0477 9 £4.95

The Export of Hazard
Edited by JANE H. IVES
This report by a distinguished group of legal and public policy experts focuses on the political and economic impact of hazard export on the US, Europe and developing countries. Ralph Nader writes in the foreword: 'The contributors raise important questions in the context of abuses which are occurring daily in international commerce . . . May some of you take up the challenge of these chapters.' 0 7102 0072 2 £14.95

Routledge & Kegan Paul
14 Leicester Square London WC2

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The magus

Oliver Harris

The Adding Machine: Collected Essays
WILLIAM BURROUGHS *John Calder* £10.95

WITH A GREY, sepulchral smile, trilby hat and right hand raised in mock salute, William Burroughs stares icily out from the cover of his *Collected Essays*, looking for all the world like a sad and seedy old scoutmaster — or is that hand, slightly blurred, about to deliver a karate chop?

Like their author, the essays are a minefield of misinformation, an eccentric collage of ambiguous provocations and disguises. Indeed, having long since abandoned any distinction between his life and his work, the Burroughs of these pieces is very much in persona. At the lectern or on stage, this avant-garde senior citizen — here at his most accessible — is a Demolition Man who cannot be dismissed.

Nothing if not extreme, his style is redolent of the same bitter odour as Swift's *A Modest Proposal*. And yet, beneath, there is a suffering melancholy, a naive charm and outrageous honesty: con man or idiot savant, Burroughs remains a genuine writer, an incorruptible genius. And the *truth* of his work? Well, as Nietzsche remarked, 'The falsity of an opinion is no objection to it' — what counts is whether it proves life-furthering. Apocalyptic visions may be commonplace, indeed ubiquitous, but then we just might be the generation the past has warned us about. The evidence looks good.

The collection opens with a retrospective, a literary autobiography which details the sources that have inspired his parodic offspring. The theme is taken up in another piece, *'Les Voleurs'*, where he eschews the 'fetish of originality' and makes plagiarism the ironic principle of creativity: coming out of the closet to join the ranks of mature poets who steal rather than borrow.

Burroughs's piracy extends beyond kidnapping the characters of other writers to the wholesale theft of his own work. Thus, *'Les Voleurs'* closes with the call, 'We are not responsible. Steal anything in sight.' — words lifted straight from *Naked Lunch*. From this bizarre self-referential nature of the Burroughs oeuvre comes its haunting power to disturb and mutate. The B-side of his obsessive repetition is a tautological invulnerability: Burroughs is impervious to questions of common-or-garden accuracy.

Indeed, contradictions and mistakes run both within and across essays. For example, he quotes a sentence from Hemingway's *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* three times, each time differently, never correctly. It is surely a measure of Burroughs's anomalous genius that such errors are creative rather than detrimental: they further attest to his fiction's omnivorous refusal to be either defined or definitive.

He explains how his characters are composites, identikit pictures culled from reading, dreams, photographs, 'reality'. And if there persists a contempt for humanity, it is balanced by the love he lavishes on these creations. Valedictory as ever, he declares that 'If I am remembered for anything it will be for my characters'.

The function of writing is variously defined: as time travel, as sympathetic magic, as revealing the knowledge we hide from ourselves. His paranoid epistemology embraces the nature of randomness (no mere Jungian synchronicity for Burroughs), language as virus and the table-tapping procedure of cut-ups. There are essays on civil defence, Freud, women (drily subtitled 'A Biological Mistake?'), immortality, mind control, even how to stop smoking. He reports on Genet, Conrad and Greene and writes superbly about Kerouac, Beckett and Proust. He reminisces about Paris, warns against the CIA practising its 'computerized black magic' and hails Nixon as a folk hero. Humankind is heckled for being a beached fish of a species, heading for disaster, while he rails against Jerry Falwell and the 'Moron Majority' and welcomes space as the Final Frontier.

And yet, despite the range of subjects, they are written about in the same nasal voice, drawling along until each illustrative skit takes on independent life, blossoming into a Venus Fly Trap for the unwary reader. So, *The Adding Machine* is inevitably another invitation into Burroughs's private universe, sent out from his present semi-retirement in Hicksville, Kansas, where he lives, like the Wizard of Oz, a frail figure behind the curtain of his sorcerer's prose, still frantically pulling levers to exorcise the daemons we cannot quite dismiss. □

Streetcreatures

Alison Stone

In hungry packs we prowl
Through their nightmares.
We are the city's tattered fringe, invisible
Until our hot breath
Sears their flesh.
We long to decorate our fangs
With their well educated blood.

They bar the door, we're gnawing
On the chains. Let them try
To smash our speakers, the notes still bound
Like greyhounds through my blood.
We can turn tricks
Into suitors with our visions
Of Clark Gable movies. Our hair's
The color of their money.

Come read my story
In the braille of tracks.
Or won't *Vogue* recommend it? We crawl out
From the carpet as their silver laughter
Echoes off fine china. Our muddy footprints
Stain the sheets.

We're cornered, desperate, savage
And as they shop and sun we'll
Strike. Then they'll be down
With us at last, our corpses
Lying equal in the
Bloody afterglow.

ARCHITECTURE

Place of healing

Jules Lubbock

Not steel and concrete but sunlit brick leads a new revolution in our health care

I DON'T OFTEN HAVE the pleasure of celebrating a new building which is good, beautiful and socially worthwhile. The Community Care Centre in Lambeth is also something more: with the full participation of the community client, Edward Cullinan Associates have designed a new type of building for a new facility which pioneers a new phase in the development of the National Health Service. It heralds new thinking by two professions, medicine and architecture, severely criticised for their 'sod you' attitudes to the public they serve.

Two shortcomings in the NHS relate specifically to the need for the Care Centre. First, the closure of local hospitals and the concentration of resources in remote, impersonal and expensively equipped District Hospitals has created a gulf between them and the primary care provided by GPs and local services. Sufferers from chronic illnesses like bronchitis, arthritis and strokes cannot receive treatment of an appropriate kind, for lack of which they become housebound and, in the case of stroke victims, frequently unable to regain

The garden seen through 'veils' of glass

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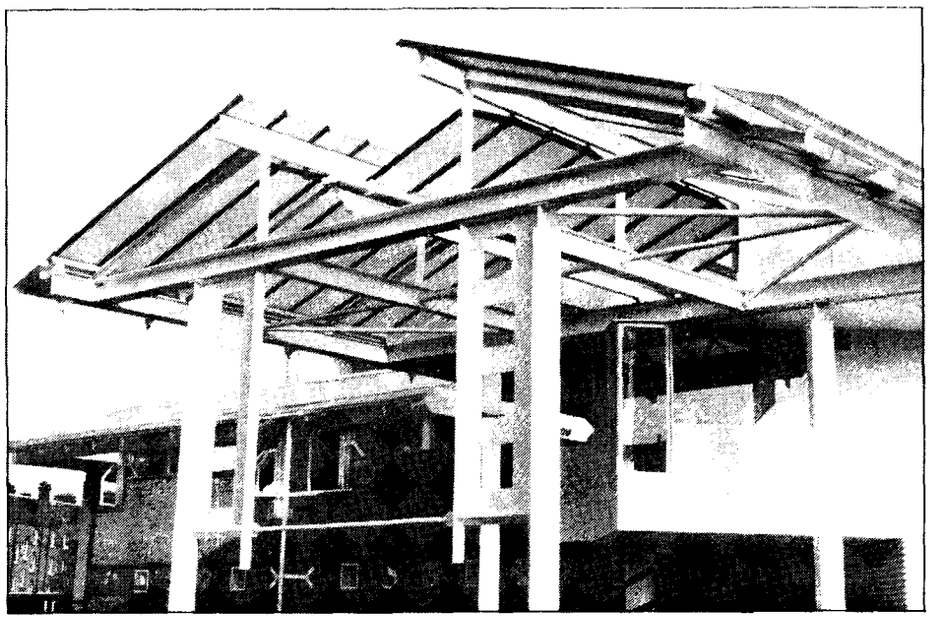

The long, low-level, domestic-sized facade

their speech. Second, doctors stand accused of taking our bodies out of our control when we are ill and failing to give us the means of becoming independent again (see *NS* 25.11.83).

Both Titmuss and Illich drew attention to such problems. The 1974 Labour government proposed some solutions. The Health Minister, David Owen, strengthened the democratic powers of the Community Health Councils (CHCs) set up by the Tories and encouraged them to root for Community Hospitals on the lines of rural cottage hospitals when local inner city hospitals were closed.

Lambeth was such a place. When closure of its friendly hospital and the transfer of its services to St Thomas' was proposed in 1975, an exceptionally vigorous CHC, armed with its enhanced powers, sprang into action, not to oppose closure but to canvass the opinion of local residents, councillors, doctors and nurses and forge them into a formidable action group. The Care Centre is what, after intense discussion, they decided they needed and fought to obtain.

The long, low building of yellow brick with red bandings and generous eaves does not look like a modern hospital at all. On the ground floor are treatment rooms, sitting and dining-rooms leading onto the south-facing garden of grassy banks and paths that meander through formal groves and bowers. Upstairs are wards for 20 residential patients, with a sunny terrace that also leads into the garden. Treatment is provided both for those well enough to attend by day and for those who need to stay for short periods, either because their families need a rest, for more extended care, or because their condition is terminal. Local people felt that St Thomas' could not handle such patients appropriately, hence the call for an 'intermediate care' centre to bridge the gulf between hospital and GP. The centre has its own staff and GPs attend their own patients.

Participation extended to the design. Rooms to serve the exact requirements of the staff were the outcome of 30 meetings between the architects and the clients' Project Team, on which all the medical specialisms, the local community and the maintenance staff were represented. It took 18 months for the design to be agreed. My interviews with staff and patients confirm that this was thoroughly worthwhile.

But the building is more than a functional framework for therapy. It is itself a place of healing, one which makes people feel better much as a great cathedral inspires devotion, or as an old mansion house used to be a theatre of conviviality and hospitality — the very root of the word hospital. And this was the architects' first thought: when asked for a building 'domestic in character', they replied, 'Let's throw a country house party for sick people!'

For although Cullinans are committed to consultation they are also adamant that architectural beauty must not be sacrificed. They found, however, that the process of submitting their designs to sometimes devastating criticism inspired the creative response to produce an artistically more eloquent building.

We have seen how they interpreted the request for a building of domestic character. But it took months of juggling to hit upon a plan in which the diamond-shaped sitting room downstairs, with its bay windows onto the entrance hall on one side and onto a conservatory at the back, could form the heart of the Care Centre in such a way that, from the front door, one catches a glimpse, as through so many wall veils, into the conservatory and the garden beyond. While each area is distinct it also overlaps and penetrates the next, providing a continuous series of surprises. This is not purely aesthetic. For a patient walking at a painfully slow pace these richly superimposed veils encourage them to wander and to explore, 'to rise up and walk', which is the most important thing many patients, if they are to regain their independence, have to relearn.

The corridors are particularly remarkable, for they were conceived, as a result of the clients' criticism of an early design, as places in which to commune — downstairs, as a kind of hospital High Street, with octagonal piazzas every so often from which treatment rooms are entered, with built-in seats at which to pause for breath. The ward corridor upstairs varies this theme with a calmer atmosphere created by shadowy white surfaces, and a high arched ceiling into which softly diffused natural light flows mysteriously from concealed window nooks on one side and from the wards on the other. Here is real serenity and peace for terminally sick patients seeking sanctuary.

For the less sick, who, as part of their treatment, are encouraged to get dressed and make their own beds, the four-bed wards have an almost holiday atmosphere. Tranquil lighting shines down from high level windows and the garden is framed, seen through French windows and across a terrace that evokes both a seaside promenade and the deck of a cruise liner with built-in flower pots and slatted benches. The upper conservatory is a real suntrap, from which a pier leads into the garden. Patients may enjoy this view from their beds or, feeling better, get up, sit on the terrace with their friends or wander downstairs to join the folk on the garden terrace.

And it works. Terminally ill patients and their families, previously fraught with tension, find a haven of peace; frustrated and often bitter stroke sufferers regain the will to live.

What is the secret of the architectural magic? Mansion house and garden, the London terrace house with its bay windows, the seaside and ships, monastic sanctuary: these are superimposed to create an idiom for this new type of health building and to provide true physick for the minds, as well as for the bodies, of those who suffer. It is the architecture of healing. It is also eloquent testimony to what the combined arts of healing, architecture and participatory politics can achieve. □

DANCE

Young blood

Stephanie Jordan

Dance Umbrella
Sadler's Wells; The Place
Royal Ballet
Covent Garden

VAL BOURNE's **Dance Umbrella** is now in its seventh season and is established as a crucial fixture on the dance calendar. Like the Proms, where more people hear more contemporary music than elsewhere, so Umbrella, with its superior publicity and generally shrewd judgment, excites greater public interest in the more demanding events in dance today — largely British, but with enriching foreign contributions.

In 1984, audiences in London alone were 15,500 — not bad for a festival which receives an annual subsidy that wouldn't even pay Poor Lord Gowrie's gas bill. It is by far the best way to discover new ideas, emerging young talent. Yet, far from encouraging or even acknowledging the scale of an enterprise measuring 80 London events and spanning eight weeks, critical coverage remains patchy and, where it does exist, frequently hostile. Yes, I too appreciate the virtue of red plush on the

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eye and bum but I cannot so readily as others equate it with artistic merit.

David Gordon and Pick Up Co. made their second appearance in Britain opening the Festival at Sadler's Wells. Gordon's method is to theatricalise and draw wit from the straightforward movement and performance persona that characterised early American post-modern dance. In the process, he makes the gauche, the unfinished, the dancer-as-layman look beautiful, achieving this in a way that is entirely his own. In *My Folks*, an affectionate *revue* using Jewish imagery, it is professional wit feeding on the spirit of amateur theatricals, with Gordon and enigmatic Valda Setterfield as head of their 'family' and an array of brightly-coloured sheets that become veils, shawls, sleighs, or components of a tableau, each gag a gentle Gordon chuckle.

Offenbach Suite, to that composer's 'cello duets, is the only piece in which I've seen dancers executing ballet at half-mast — dare I say incompetently — but still looking fine. It's because they exude the confidence and graciousness of classical ballet and because Gordon has treated them with such musical imagination, bringing out the points of melodic tension while we must search for those music and dance connections across his amoeboid formations. He makes us look anew.

Where Gordon produces a vernacular from within American post-modernism, in the Mark Morris Dance group we note a curious quest for it from diffuse sources. *I Love You Dearly* is the setting of strophic Rumanian vocal numbers, whereas *Deck of Cards* uses C&W music to depict a provincial American idealism: long distances (the articulated truck, a recalcitrant toy, driving through the night); domesticity (the earringed Little Lady waiting back home); the unschooled but devout (the soldier kid who, the T. Texas Tyler melodrama informs us, was wrongly hauled up before a court martial for producing a pack of playing cards, in lieu of prayerbook, in church). It is danced skilfully and seriously — except that the soldier is without trousers and the lonesome woman is Morris himself, graceful in drag.

In the same programme we had pieces to Boccherini, Beethoven, a marmorial solo for Morris to an anthem, *Jealousy*, from Handel's *Hercules* and one, *Lovey*, to the unendearing band Violent Femmes, the result recalling the murderous anger of Alice Cooper. Throughout, the dances adhere closely to the rhythms, even the meanings of the texts, which create strident contrasts between works and no end of language possibilities. But to programme such eclecticism is difficult: you laugh or cry uneasily. Morris has the skill to set up your responses, then to confound them so that he can sneer at you. Either that, or he is innocent of our preconceptions about musical and dance sources. Handel or Homespun are all one to Morris. But whether he puts it to the best use or not, he's original and clever at his craft.

Ignore anything scurrilous that you might have read about Second Stride's programme at The Place. Siobhan Davies's *School for Lovers Danced* is a bold, experimental application of dance to prominent moments from *Cosi fan Tutte*. It mixes music visualisation with gestural codes which face the challenge of both Mozart and Da Ponte. Necessary company economies preclude more set than a length of silk manipulated to suggest beds, headdresses, costumes, walls or partitions. Following the constructions of the opera's set pieces, Davies produces a stream of solos, duets, trios, quartets and quintets, and equivalents of the rapid asymmetrical recitatives. But such deft matching, though fascinating in detail, becomes a handicap to the broader sense of the piece, and the overhasty ending disappoints expectations. No misgivings about Davies's *Silent Partners*. And the Second Striders have never danced better.

No space for more than a mention of the Independent contributions, notably Ashley Page for his varied programme, Anna Furse for a fresh, imaginative piece involving students from Leicester Polytechnic, and Belinda Neave, a late but welcome Extra in the perilously late (10 p.m.) programme.

Meanwhile, the **Royal Ballet** presented a variety bill, a set of party pieces preceding *The Two Pigeons*, all Ashton except for the *Le Corsaire pas de deux*. There was Ashton's latest creation, *La Chatte metamorphosée en femme*, in which Merle Park personified a smart puss, parading, displaying claws and sizing up a remote-controlled mouse. It is a trifle. Presumably *Corsaire* was chosen primarily to display the much acclaimed American star Fernando Bujones. Certainly, he is very powerful, a meticulous, exciting technician, but, here, with his overblown rib-cage and pushy carriage, he veers towards the virtuoso American hero rather than the classical artist. □

THEATRE

In a mad world

Benedict Nightingale

As furiously inventive as ever, Howard Barker has three new plays at the Pit

HOWARD of that ilk would surely be pleased by the OED's definition of a 'barker' as, among odder things, 'a noisy assailant'. For 15 years he's battered and bruised our heads with angry ideas, our eyes with lurid incidents, our ears with a weird, overblown rhetoric, part pugilism and part poetry; and he's left me, for one, more disoriented than any playwright I've encountered in my reviewing career.

Let me be more personal still about this hyped-up assailant, this blistering Barker. I've just read through my old reviews of his work, from *Claw*, which ended with an embarrassing troublemaker being quietly murdered in some government asylum, to *Power of the Dog*, a sprawling evocation of Europe in wartime turmoil and dismemberment. My inconsistency appals me. Barker is imaginative and predictable, rich and thin, fascinating and boring, intuitively incisive and paranoid, exotic and pretentious, verbally inventive and absurdly stilted. Maybe this says something about me, maybe about his work, maybe about both.

After all, if Barker fails to be clear and categorisable, he's succeeding in at least some of his aims. What theatre does supremely well (he thinks) is 'subvert conventions of thought, loosen the matrix of received wisdom, unpick habits and responses, set up healthy confusions'. And it could be more than that, a way of pulling the spectator down into the author's darker, more subterranean parts and passages. Hasn't Barker emphasised that art is mysterious, 'the outcome of secret, unheard debates in the writer's soul, social influences notwithstanding'? Hasn't he promised to 'follow the demands of my own imagination before I consider my responsibility to any movement' and added that 'any contradictions that result from this I rejoice in'? Yes, that's what he's said; and well said too.

It's hardly as if it has led to imagination for imagination's sake. Mannered, self-indulgent, maddeningly uneven his plays may sometimes seem: they aren't lacking in content, any of them. The stage (he's said) is 'the last remaining arena for the free assault on our society; the sump to which our poisons and our malices, our despairs and terrors, drain... the last playground of the emotions; the last public place for a critical but humane judgement of a monstrous speculative society'.

That's meant *No End of Blame*, about the anguished disintegration of a cartoonist not unlike our own Vicky. It's meant *The Loud Boy's Life*, in which the subject was a bug-eyed ideologue and opportunist not unlike Enoch Powell. It's meant *Alpha Alpha*, with characters not unlike the Kray twins making the point that crime may be the logical response to a corrupt society. Fact merges with fantasy, history with eccentric speculation, to give us play after play insisting we recognise that, in this crazed world, the unlikely is all too likely, the incredible has happened and will happen again. The latest of the line, and not the least striking, are the three studies of failed and/or perverted idealism which Ian McDiarmid and a fine supporting company have just brought to the Pit.

Downchild presents us with one character glancingly modelled on the late Tom Driberg, an ex-communist gossip columnist with a taste for rough trade, and another indebted to 'Lucky' Lucan, a murderous aristo given to maniac reverie. The first discovers that the second is being hidden by a one-time Labour PM, who fears that arrest and trial might expose his own shady financial dealings. At this point the scurrilous turns scathing and, by the end, savage as well. The enemy is not the snooper nor the mad nob, maimed victims of an evil system as they both are. No, it's an administration not unlike the Wilson and Callaghan administrations, one that, as the Driberg clone climactically cries, 'helped old women bleed in gutters, stuffed despair through letter-boxes of flats, made workers in the factory ashamed of their beliefs, kicked hope out of the hearts of men'.

The effect is part gaudy whodonnut, part bitter denunciation of what Barker has called 'a perpetually treacherous social democratic Labour Party', but overall simpler and less sophisticated than the next play, **Crimes in Hot Countries**. Here imaginative history intrudes, too, in the form of a smug travesty of T. E. Lawrence; but that's peripheral to the main business, an abortive mutiny in one of Britannia's remoter colonial hotspots. Barker's

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contempt for a notably unmaternal mother-country — variously represented by a senile governor, a dilapidated Victorian doll and two gentleman-killers in tuxedos — is scarcely less evident than in *Downchild*. What's more interesting to him, though, are the problems afflicting the squaddies and prostitutes seeking to substitute their own democracy for her clammy embrace: internal discord, compromising dependence on the old financial establishment, distracting personal passions.

There's more complexity, more ambiguity here than in many of Barker's plays, but less sheer ambition than in the last of the trio: **The Castle**. Back come crusaders, weary with travel and pillage, to find their estate transformed into an aspiring paradise, all social and sexual equality. What follows is not unexpected, and very unexpected indeed. Abetted by a fanatic Arab mathematician, the natural contours of the hillside are replaced by angular fortifications, those of the community itself by discipline, rigour and assorted other expressions of an all-male hierarchy, down to jet-planes anachronistically screeching overhead. The hardest and most radical of the women, the one who would make the world an all-female ghetto, turns assassin, is viciously tortured — and then, in a strange twist of Barker's waking nightmare, is given an absolute power it's clear she'll wield with an absolute cruelty. Suddenly, surprisingly, radical feminism is accused of being obverse Thatcherism.

That's not an insight to endear Barker to every member of his theatregoing constituency; but then his treatment of gender, sexuality, has never been comforting. The more conventional have been upset by a proliferation of four-letter language that sometimes gives his dialogue an oddly childish ring, as if overage infants were talking dirty behind the adults' backs; the less conventional by the inference, evident in *Downchild*, that homosexuality is perversion. But actually there's purpose in both. Those four-letter words are Barker's way of emphasising how much of life, including political life, is infused by sex, determined by it. And heterosexuality, too, he customarily sees as distorted, warped. In fact, what's new about *Castle* is that is shows, not only a sexually damaged revolutionary and several sexually damaged reactionaries, but the possibility of sexual warmth, generosity, happiness.

It's a big, brave play, one that answers and doesn't quite answer doubts about Barker. Doesn't abundance sometimes become excess, poetry luxury? Isn't the density of his imagination still more apparent than the originality of his intellect? Doesn't he rely rather too much on feeling, instinct, rather too little on observation? Perhaps. But that's a grudging summing-up of a dramatist as tough-spirited yet less doctrinaire than Bond, as sweeping in his concerns but more daringly inventive than Hare or Brenton. Barker's oeuvre is Dungeons and Dragons with our own world's ogres and imps lurking between the mouldy stalactites and gungy stalagmites: a very serious game, and one not finished yet. □

The texts of Downchild, Crimes in Hot Countries *and* The Castle *are published, in separate volumes, by Calder.*

FILMS

Boy's own adventure

John Coleman

Bill Markham (Powers Boothe) and son Tomme (Charley Boorman) out of their depth in the Amazon

The Emerald Forest (15)
Leicester Square Theatre
Finye: The Wind
ICA
St Elmo's Fire (15)
Plaza; Screen on the Green
The Bride (15)
Odeon, Leicester Square

JOHN BOORMAN has come up with two fascinating stories: one on celluloid, which is **The Emerald Forest**; the other a book-length journal*, packed with passion, anecdotes and hard facts, about the hazardous making of the film. And somehow this double experience at once complicates and simplifies the reviewer's job.

Drawing on a newspaper account of a real-life event a decade ago, the movie tells — with immense craftsmanship — of the kidnapping by Amazonian Indians of seven-year-old Tommy, son of a tough dam-building engineer Bill (Powers Boothe), of the lad's rearing to manhood by these friendly paint-daubed Invisible People, a 'lost' tribe, and of the agonised and mind-expanding re-encounter between Tommy (now Charley Boorman) and father on Bill's tenth annual jungle excursion in search of him. Boorman and his writer Rospo Pallenberg, who bitterly fell out with the director over his casting of son Charley, give us full measure in adventure, dastardly deeds and romance. Blow-darts, spears and arrows fly; Tommy/Tomme is painfully initiated as fledged hunter-warrior via an ant-smothered 'death' and, through a potent drug, has dream-visions where his far-flying alter ego is truly fledged, an eagle; he also woos and wins comely Kachiri (Dira Paes) amid much pool-frolicking and mirth, though the winning entails a bash on her head with a ritual club — 'Oh, do it *right*,' she whispers as he flinches, one of the few flashes of humour.

This would-be Eden has its real snakes, of course, but even snakier human villains, most evident of whom are the Fierce People, cannibals driven from their ancient territory by the subtler baddies, those tree-felling, land-clearing dam-constructors: in other words, civilising old Us. Excitement goes on boiling up as the 'Fierce' tribe destroys the Invisible one's village, dragging off its naked maidens to shanty-town prostitution in exchange for guns and ammunition. Tomme's spiritual father, the chief, dies in an abortive rescue attempt and it is left to his actual father Bill to orchestrate a triumphant, Western-style liberation. There is much more inventive action to relish, including Tomme's shinning up the facade of a block of flats and the maybe magical destruction, however temporary, of what modern man has wrought: ir voked frogs galore, a massive flood.

While researching the project, Boorman spent time with a 'wise' if suspicious chieftain out of the Stone age, Takuma, and on him is surely based the beautifully played tribal father Wanadi (Rui Polonah) who has ousted Bill for good (and, incidentally, young Tommy's mother and sister: excellent Meg Foster and Estee Chandler in shorn roles). And that phrase 'for good' is deliberately ambivalent. For Boorman's diary shows him firmly on the side of — to him — forgotten, heroic virtues. Quoting himself, he is fervent and explicit. 'We have to acknowledge what is still tribal in us. That was my aim in *Excalibur*, to touch the mythic, archetypal sources that begat us. So my aim here is mythic, not naturalistic. I am not going to film a real tribe. I am going to invent tribes. The surface, the detail must be correct. That is no problem... .'

But isn't it? Granted the sensible bravery of subtitling the presumed forms of Tupi spoken rather than make shift with pidgin English, yet the devoted *imagery* of the film (wild dances,

**Money Into Light: The Emerald Forest, A Diary* (Faber £4.95).

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rituals, ground emeralds for that 'Invisible'-making green paste, reconstructed huts) and indeed the film itself fall finally between two stools or styles: out-and-out ripping yarnsmanship and documentary. One is left mistrustful, and none too happy about just how noble these savages are, though God knows our civilisation is a shambles. And, unequivocally, *The Emerald Forest*'s message about ecological horrors in store needs saying and comes across with great strength (which is more than can be claimed for rubbish like *Raiders of the Lost Ark* or dangerous vagaries like Werner Herzog's *Where the Green Ants Dream*): it is that we are inexorably — thousands of acres daily — diminishing those Amazonian rain forests which produce some third of our planet's oxygen supply. Boorman does, after all, leave us feeling breathless.

Old magic also confronts new ways in the African **Finye: The Wind**, a forthright piece by Souleymane Cissé from Mali. Here an aged Headman has rather to come to reluctant terms with contemporary realities. His grandson, a disappointed failed student, loves the daughter of the swaggering local military tyrant. Corruption smogs the bright African air as thickly as the druggy smoke from collegian light-ups. A student revolt is violently suppressed by the soldiery and things look dire for that grandson and even his beloved. Other voices, other rooms: and the despot finds himself in turn disgraced, outfaced on highest orders. As a detailed portrait of disaffected, sexy, exam-beset youth under sunnier skies and muckier auspices it has much to offer.

Would as much could be vaunted of the sorry, teen-age-market **St Elmo's Fire**, which flits hither and yon among a septet of recent college graduates, American-fashion. The oddest thing about their amorous, drunken, coke-headed swappings and mishaps is that drop-out Billy, the biggest shit of them all, is not only their hero but apparently the film's. Franc Roddam's **The Bride** is a Frankenstein-created-Eva (Jennifer Beals) travesty starring Sting but lacking any. □

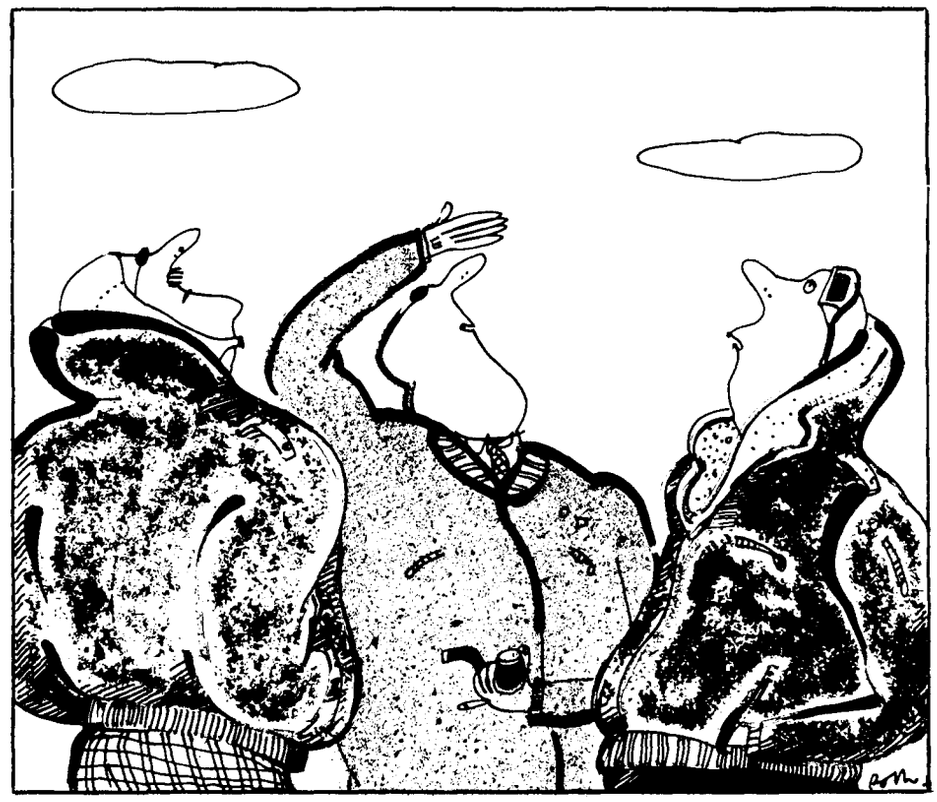
Recommended viewing

A regular selection by our critic from films still doing the rounds

Dim Sun Hong Kong-born Wayne Wang's appealing music portrait (with visual bows to Japanese master Ozu) of Chinese family in freshly observed San Francisco: widowed mother, unmarried daughter, cheery uncle. Touching, humorous, astringent, a young director's invitation to 'only connect'.

Prizzi's Honour With genial fidelity to Richard Condon's triple-cross comedy of mafioso manners, veteran John Huston keeps it in *his* 'family' as daughter Anjelica pops wickedly up to net Jack Nicholson's bemused killer, love-torn Charley, from a killing new wife (Kathleen Turner).

The Purple Rose of Cairo Woody Allen's brilliantly faceted, sad-funny fantasy, as relevant to our depressed Eighties as its Depression Thirties. Actor in idiot movie descends from New Jersey screen briefly to woo movie-mad, downtrodden housewife, making chaos and whoopee. (Mia Farrow, Jeff Daniels).



Christine Roche

Fly like a bird

Naseem Khan

THERE'S SOMETHING about gliding that's very bad for the prose. This is Mark 3 and blow me if I can get away from the purple imagery — serene skies; mute, slender machines — and all sorts of other excesses I am too ashamed to mention. If gliding itself is a challenge, writing about it is something worse.

What is it about certain sports that releases the romantic in people? Sailing, ski-ing, gliding: they all do it. You can't imagine getting lyrical over five-a-side football, now, or squash. But gliding, what images that conjures up: life lived tranquilly on another level and, in the background, one of those rich, discreet Hollywood symphony orchestras playing something by Greig. The pilot casually touches the odd button, the thing glides on. What grace, what serenity. What balls.

Mind you, the gliding fraternity does its best to maintain this celestial image, and very well it does it. Close your eyes and listen to this: 'How often has man envied the birds, dreamed of the possibility of flight?... Perhaps the "still point of the turning world" best evokes the timeless quality of gliding — an opportunity to escape from the mad traffic we call life today, to open our eyes and really see the land and sky around you for the first time — and be part of it.'

Good stuff, eh? Not surprising that you find yourself halfway down the M4 heading for Booker Flying Club, whence the brochure comes, feeling not so much like someone about to go up in a glider as someone about to take Holy Communion.

The thing about gliders and gliding is their improbability. For a start, the planes themselves look extremely unlikely — long, thin things with exaggerated wings. Because gliders have no engines they look even more like make-believe. There they are strewn about the airfield in what seems to be a random way weighted down on one wing by a couple of old car tyres. They look like something out of a bargain basement: all beauty and no brains.

Down in the restaurant/clubhouse it has the unreal air of a Douglas Bader movie. Not a woman in sight except behind the counter and me. (Booker's list of 65 qualified instructors includes a mere four women.) It's all serious groups of men talking technicalities. Outside on the tarmac sits a plethora of machines and equipment. Notices on the clubhouse board offer bargains: second-hand gliders, special offer, buy now. The camaraderie of the cockpit rules — earnest, intense but also extremely open. Enthusiasts tend to be generous people; gliding people are no exception.

It's a cold day, that first one of my two-day course. (Six flights came in a package that costs £84). That's the next thing to puncture the rosy image in which time seems set in a perpetual sunset. As Peter, the grey-haired instructor, circles the airfield with a succession of students, the rest of us hang about on the field, scanning the skies for signs of glider. When it gets too biting we retreat to a defunct airport bus parked unglamorously on the grass: home of old tyres, log books and back copies of the *Daily Telegraph*. Here we carefully log up all our flights: who; in what; what height; how long. The little black speck reappears in the distance. 'Ah,' say the lads knowledgeably, 'He's on his base leg. Flaring out....' There's a thump and a whump and there the glider is back again, spinning along the ground like a top till it runs out of steam, the two figures stuck

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phlegmatically in it like wooden Noahs. Good pilots get the glider to stop near the bus. Others whizz on to the boundary hedge which is a bore because we, the lads, have to go and retrieve it. And they're off again, the next short flight: ten minutes or so from start to finish.

Trying to fly a glider is nothing like the effortless prose of Booker's brochure. It is frankly bloody hard work. First of all the tug plane pulls you up to 1600 feet (watch out that you don't fly below the lead plane and jerk about in his turbulence, or too high and drag him end-up on the cable). Then you pull a knob and disconnect yourself. Away flies the tug back to base, and the flying begins.

Although it's got no engines there's a lot you can do with a glider (and do wrong). Bits of it move, depending on what you do with your hands and feet — the rear rudder waggles, the tail elevator goes up and down, ailerons on the wing move and so do air brakes. Any of these result in the glider doing something dramatic — banking steeply so that you're at right angles to the landscape stretched out far below; plunging nose downward. The point of it is to get it all to work together, in response to wind and air. This is not easy, and a tremendous sensation when, for maybe a minute or less, it really works ('Soaring, silent, free, suspended,' as the brochure has it). There you are, trying to hold the glider steady with the horizon, keeping the wings level with the ailerons and the nose up. Panic sets in. The dials show a fall in speed. You increase the angle of the nose, pushing the stick forwards. The whole thing tilts downwards, aimed at the ground, like something out of an old war movie. The speed rises and rises and rises. (If you need to parachute out, the instructor had said, just remember to bend your knees on landing.) No need for that: rationality returns and the adrenalin lapses. After two flights I could hardly wait to go up again. After four I was tireder than I could ever remember being. Midway through the second day I got my verve and enjoyment back again.

Serenity is, all too often, a surface job. Look at a swan, for instance, and remember that what makes it go are those big, ugly, webbed feet pushing it strongly through the water. Gliding is like that too: an effortlessness powered by effort, serenity based on sweat. Great stuff — even better than the prose. □

Work in progress *will be back next week.*

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams
Puppy love

I ENJOYED the Queen lecturing Caribbean islanders on birth-control, but who was she *really* talking to if not Victoria Gillick?

Everyone here thought she said the 'copulation rate' was too high. Little slips of one kind or another, mikes packing up, boats refusing to come alongside, ancient gardeners going bananas, things which permit Her Majesty to bear up splendidly under hardship tend to distract one from seeing her tours for what they are: animated Gulliver's travels whose satirical targets are nearer home. The Queen's power is enormous. It is exercised metaphorically, by travelling and being presented regularly with supplicatory bouquets from all over the world. Don't we all follow her with our eyes wherever she goes?

Mrs Gillick received a more direct broadside from *Schoolgirl Mum*, last week's **Forty Minutes** (BBC2), in which we heard that next year '10,000 schoolgirls will become pregnant before their 16th birthday'; the sad fact being that none of them know who they are yet. 'I got pregnant at a party,' said a woman of 15, still dazed by the occurrence. 'I didn't realise till I was eight months gone.' How would a baby affect the lives of Fernanda, 16, and Eamon 17? 'I don't think it will affect our lives,' said Fernanda, as her baby offered its first disagreement in the background. Janet, 15, said to herself, 'I've had sex so it's most probably changing me body or something.' How right she was. 'The test was positive. I couldn't believe it.'

The underage law is supposed to protect girls from older men. Boys are rarely prosecuted, even though they are more often careless. 'We did use things once or twice but it's not the same,' said Maxine's boyfriend, voicing an old truth. Did he realise it was illegal? He did, yes, 'but it's hard to stop yourself'. Trudi, too, wasn't expecting any knock on the window as she broke the law. Contraceptives never interested Maxine because 'I never thought I'd be doing anything to need them'. Education would seem to be the answer — 'They talk about how the sperm meets the egg and everything, but they're not allowed to tell us, etc . . .' — plus practical assistance for all. One thing everyone (except Mrs G.) agrees on: lack of protection never stopped anyone having sex.

This programme too had Swiftian echoes: in traditional fashion the RP-speaking commentary had to visit the satirical world of 'up north' to collect colourful enough data for TV. Why couldn't we have had sardonic Mancunians quizzing knocked-up Sloanes? I think we all know the answer to that one.

On **Moment of Truth** (BBC1) we joined 13 delinquent dogs and their 'obedience trainers' Jenni and Herbie Watson on a long weekend that was to be the last for some of them if they didn't pull their ideas together by Monday morning. None was seen to be overtly promiscuous on camera. Their problems were thought to be barking, not barking, biting, not biting, chasing people, not chasing people and generally arsing about in a disrespectful or uncivilised manner. 'This old English sheepdog has never done what he's been told in his life and has no intention of starting now,' said Jenni. A two-tone rug bounds about on springs. 'Sittt! (Fights) SSStay! (Growls) Give mummy a big wet kissss! (Complies with alacrity).' Someone else has a worse problem.

Rocky is a cowardly guard-dog who won't 'speak' to anyone unless he can help it, but manages a yelp of pain when he sees his owner going off with another dog. Clio, too, the most depressed-looking animal I have ever seen, overcame her fear of milkfloats after some unspeakable and unseen sanctions and was last seen actually riding on one with an almost resigned expression on her tragic features. Altogether it was a great plug for the short sharp shock theory of re-education: 'Since their 48 hours in the Reform School many dogs are beginning to behave themselves,' said Herbie. What footpath revenges are being plotted by their graduates, I wonder?

'The condemned man ate a hearty breakfast,' began Bernard Levin humourously as he set out in **Hannibal's Footsteps** (C4) on the first leg of a four-part journey through southern France to the Alps. Levin's legs didn't look strong enough for three more programmes, but he seemed pleased with his inflatable coat-hanger, collapsible wash-basin and emergency police whistle 'to summon assistance' — presumably from one of the Channel Four film crew. Levin 'couldn't put a name to the birds . . . no flamingos today', but he was full of philosophical platitudes on bullfighting, Van Gogh and the Nature of Travel. Why do it? he unwisely allowed himself to ask himself. His answer was that 'We travel abroad for the same reason we travel inward. The quest is an end in itself, which is why "it is better to travel hopefully than to arrive" ' — a concept which, added to Levin's long-standing affection for that which has profitably gone without saying, may not be a particularly good motto for the series.

Van Gogh came more poetically to mind later in the week in a beautiful film about William Scott, **Every Picture Tells a Story** (C4) by the painter's film-maker son James. Starting from the pictures and even using their colours, James Scott looked through William's own imagination to outline key events leading up to William's father's sudden and violent death by falling off a ladder in Enniskillen, Northern Ireland, a fate which left his large family penniless and William on a parish grant to the Royal Academy.

A careful script by Shane Connaughton hands it all to the paintings: a gutted fish when William's father comes home from the war to find his dog has just been put down; a saucepan and whole fish for a reconciliation; an Orange Order parade banner giving rise, for once, to nothing more noxious than an abstraction. The film tailed off somewhat, having been planned as a trilogy, ending abruptly with shots of the great man's head and a recording of his voice lamenting the stuffiness of the old RA in the face of innovations brought about by Cezanne. □

Weekend competition

No 2897 Set by Julian Rathbone
You are invited to join in the game of 'Appropriate Presents'. Use your customary malice and bad taste to invent the most satisfactorily wrong present for some famous recipient, dead or alive: a packet of firelighters, say, for Joan of Arc. Max. 10 goes each; by 14 November.

No 2894 Set by Maud Gracechurch
Hallowe'en incantations, curses, chants for 1985.

Report By Len the Unlucky
I was feeling quite bad enough, one way and

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another, before I was shut up all week in an airless cubby-hole with your venemous and malign outpourings. Now I have permanent nausea and I'm going to have to lie down for a very long time if there's to be any hope of my recovery. I don't know whether it's the effect of your disgusting, if somewhat repetitive, imaginations or what . . . but, just to be on the safe side, twelve quid apiece for the winners and a warm, dim-lit room and a little clear beef broth for me.

Capitalism, communism,
Feudalism, anarchism,
Cynicism, fatalism,
Optimism, pessimism,
Chauvinism, terrorism,
Pugilism, barbarism,
Dogmatism, egotism,
Jingoism, masochism,
Vandalism, nepotism,
Rheumatism, onanism . . .
Perish every single 'ism
In a nuclear cataclysm.

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Hubble, bubble, boil and froth,
Toss into the seething broth
Botulism, salmonella,
Pigeon-crap from Royal umbrella,
Rancid Tory-durex-dregs,
Hairs from Arthur Scargill's legs.

Brouhaha and folderol,
Lashings of cholesterol,
Plus the newts and toads, and maybe
Bits of that birth-strangled baby
(These at least, please bear in mind,
Are getting easier to find).

JIMMIE PEARSE

In the cauldron throw the potions:
Thatcher's wit and Joseph's notions,
Noisome, foetid, foul and rotten,
Born of monsters ill-begotten.
Add to this revolting brew
Fresh blood from the Ulster stew,
Ghetto misery and pain,
Fall-out sickness, acid rain.
Mix it with the wicked art
Of a government *sans* heart.
Boil it madly, stir it well,
Curse us all to living hell.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Sprites of Hallowe'en support a
Malediction on those lice
Who pump ten percent of water
Into every bacon slice.

Gone the erstwhile fragrant frizzles,
Lost that residue of dip,
Now the rasher spits and sizzles
Shrinking into plastic strip.

Curse these greedy breakfast bashers,
Witches all! Let's bring them low,
Smother them with slimy rashers,
Drown 'em in their H20.

GERRY HAMILL

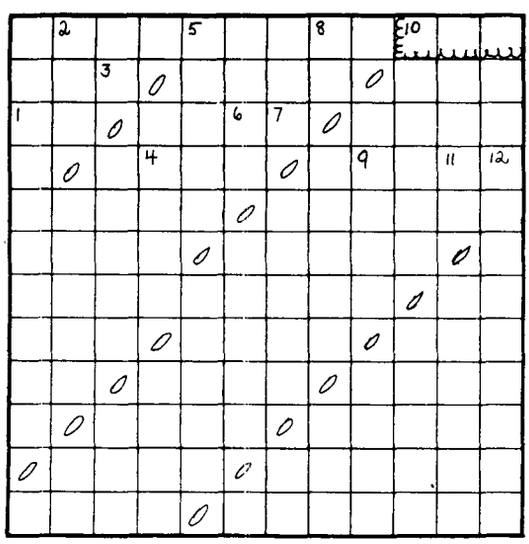
Waffle waffle, burble burble,
Brain of pea and tongue of gerbil,
Hide of rhino, shell of crab,
Rotten sulphide-stink of lab.,
Eye of Thatcher, nose of Heath,
Well-used contraceptive sheath,
Black mould scraped from classroom wall,
Foetid fart from dining hall,
Toe of blackleg, head of scab,
Wart of Brittan, Lawson's flab,
Archer's tact and Tebbit's teeth —
Mix them up to curse Sir Keith.

PETER NORMAN

Salamanca 100

'2½' (or 'Happy Families')

PRIZES: £25 cheques for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 100, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 3 December.



Name_____

Address_____

Each Down column should be considered as being cyclic and consisting of three four-letter words, the sequence beginning in the numbered square and containing one normally-entered answer, one with a misprint in one of its letters, and one in jumbled form, in no particular order but that clued. Clues to each set of three are normal, run together but not overlapping. Each Across row beginning at top left must be considered as containing a continual chain of separate loosely-connected words (one of them a part-word in Chambers) clued purely by anagrams of row letters. The indicated diagonals form a related group of at least six members, the main protagonist being apparent elsewhere in the grid by his absence. To complete the final picture solvers might number the letter which has fourteen appearances row by row, left to right, 1-14, and then join the centres of these squares with straight lines thus: 3-1-2-6-3, 4-7-10, 5-8-11, 9-12-14-13-12. (V may then possibly be seen to be aptly located?)

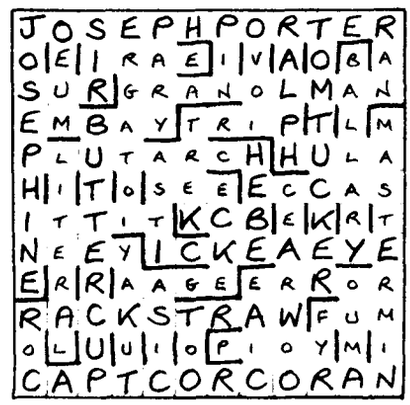
ROWS

i LOG TO AGED TAR
ii A FINE HOLY WEB
iii NOT A GAME LIMB
iv MOVE IS TO STUN
v PRESS OUR MASS
vi JAR'S ALSO HOME
vii I PASS ASIA'S UK
viii HAS RENT US MAP
ix CATCH MAC HERE
x TEE UP OUR DUEL
xi A MERE TAXI APT
xii OUGHT TO GAIN O

COLUMNS

1 Froth without mass to become bent shape, fine when low one's encountered
2 Leading English word may no longer shout to take a blade for hacking case — an old interjection, possibly
3 Small cake made of two half spheres, American, very hard on the outsides, still quiet at length if it's used in scouring wool
4 Small cake from guru's kitchen to look soft having leak note, most unfavourably showing lime
5 Gentlemen take consent on board ship as impertinence — first couple's home in the centre of between-decks, perhaps
6 Wages no longer going up to judge from work put in you say: high ones got son possibly lacking sufficient for old clothing?
7 Give a new face to alluring woman, soft one, that's to walk once more in poetic circles with a short man
8 I have trouble lifting bones, bearing limbs light in content, front parts held up infirmly as a bird
9 Plump 'help' has little bit of work for hand to catch up with: having distress to put up with was a cheek
10 Active and alert showing ready energy without stretches lacking in power, to seek almost no more protection
11 Small cakes crazy secretary possibly uses to entice most leading tycoons or litigants threatening writ
12 Perhaps I'm to fail fancy men losing head in foreign waters given impression fish are to be had here

Solution to Salamanca 99



Grid contains characters from HMS Pinafore: 'I never use a big big D'.

Prizewinners to Salamanca 99

Mike Adams (Winchester)
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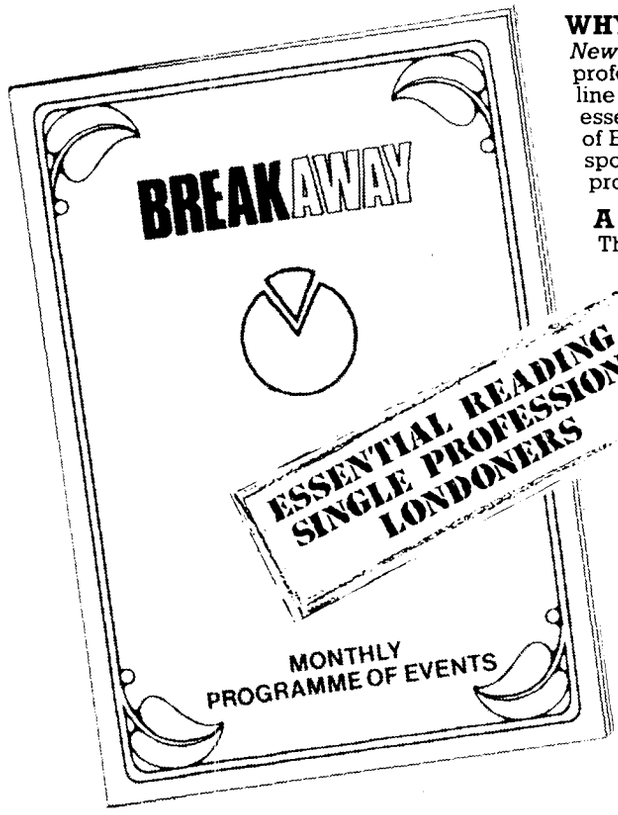

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AGENDA

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SAT 2 NOV-SUN 3 NOV

TURNING LEFT – A weekend of political Debates (Sat 10am-6.30pm, Sun 10.30am-7pm) with over seventy speakers. At Sidgwick Site, Sidgwick Ave., Cambridge University. Tickets on the door, £3 day, £5 weekend. Unwaged & students half price.

SUN 3 NOV

SPECIAL EVENT. St James's Church Piccadilly. 11am Holy Communion, Preacher **The Rev. Jesse Jackson** (former US presidential candidate) and gospel choir. Details 01-734 4511.

MON 4 NOV

'BENEATH THE WHITE COAT': seminars on science and politics organised by the **British Society for Social Responsibility in Science.** This week Win Bolton and Keith Oatley, University of Sussex: 'CAUSES OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY IN EVERYDAY LIFE.' 8.00pm. Adam's Arms, Conway Street, London W1 (tube Warren Street).

WEALTH & RESPONSIBILITY. Lecture series at St James's Church, Piccadilly at 1.10pm. This week **Swraj Paul**, Chairman Caparo Group Ltd, Founder Chairman Indo British Association, **'The Responsible Use of Wealth.'** Please contact Lyn Austin on 01-734 4511.

WED 6 NOV

ST JAMES'S CHURCH, PICCADILLY. Divided Britain. A major lecture series Wednesdays at 1.05pm. The Rt Revd David Sheppard, Anglican Bishop of Liverpool.

THURS 7 NOV

FROM ANGLO-AMERICAN TO ARMTHORPE. Public Meeting in support of miners in South Africa & Britain. Speakers from: South African Congress of Trades Unions, NUM, Anti-Apartheid Movement, ANC, Parliamentary Labour Party. 6.30pm Central Hall, Storeys Gate, London SW1. (St James's Park Tube).

SAT 9 NOV

APPROPRIATE LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT. Camden Town Hall 2pm. Speakers: Hugh McMahon MEP, Dave Wetzel. Organised by the Labour Federalist Group. Contact: Ian Hacket 01-579 7706.

SAT 2 NOV

HOW THE PUBLIC ORDER PROPOSALS AFFECT YOU!

Sat 2 Nov 1.30pm.
Central Hall Westminster
Chair: Bruce Kent.
Speakers: Jack Dromey TGWU, Harry Fletcher NAPO, Marie Staunton, Sarah Spencer NCCL.

Comprehensive briefings free on registration. NCCL members & affiliates £4, others £7.

Further details/registration
Gill Lewis NCCL 01-403 3888

'THE BIG FISH IN THE BIBLICAL WILDERNESS'

is the title of the 1985 Ernest Jones lecture to be given by **Professor Sir Edmund Leach FBA** in the **Logan Hall, Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Way, London WC1** on Wednesday 6 Nov, 8.15 p.m.

Moses Laufer, president of the British Psycho-analytical Society, will be in the Chair.

Admission is free.

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SATURDAY, 23rd NOVEMBER
9.30am — 6pm

NICARAGUA MUST SURVIVE...

NICARAGUA IS NOW FIGHTING FOR ITS SURVIVAL, IN A WAR WAGED AGAINST IT BY THE MOST POWERFUL NATION IN THE WORLD. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT 'SECRETLY' SUPPORTS U.S. POLICIES OF DESTABILISATION WHICH ARE NOW HAVING SERIOUS EFFECTS ON THE NICARAGUAN ECONOMY.

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Observers may register on the day.
For further details please contact:
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20/21 Compton Terrace, London N1 2UN. Tel: 01-359 8982.

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MISANTHROPIC MUSINGS: MORE PARTY GAMES
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL THIS TALK OF PICKING UP BOYS
MORE LIKE NOT PICKING UP BOYS
ISN'T IT A BIT RIGHT OFF, SIMILAR TO TREATING THEM AS SEX OBJECTS?
YOU COULD BE RIGHT
BUT REALLY MY PROBLEM IS EVEN STARTING TO THINK OF BOYS AS SEX OBJECTS
TOO TRUE
THE NUB OF THE MATTER
JANIS GOODMAN

CHESS

Booked up

THE AMOUNT of knowledge about the openings that an aspiring player must cram in is becoming frightening. Fifty years ago Grünfeld used to be described as a walking encyclopaedia, but nowadays he would hardly qualify as a slim volume. Batsford, the leading English-language chess publishers, produce a steady stream of books on the openings, yet there is no sign of the market nearing exhaustion. On the contrary, in the case of this commodity supply fuels demand.

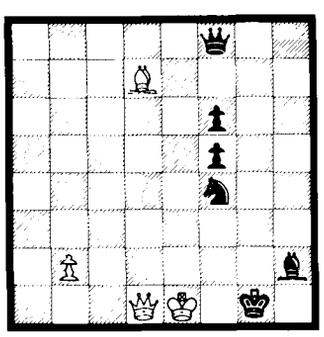
During the Atkins Memorial in Leicester this summer I congratulated Jim Plaskett on having finally hunted down the Holy Grail of the GM title. He surprised me by saying that he would be a part-timer from now on. Part of the reason was that he disliked the prevalence of prior study which enables moves to be trotted out without original thought at the board. This was just not sport. Being a notoriously bookish player, I felt bound to protest that preparation had a legitimate role, analogous to physical conditioning in other sports. Wouldn't it be silly to object to runners practising sprint finishes on the grounds that in a race they would then merely be repeating physical movements that they had already attuned their bodies to make? He replied, with some justice, that whilst running is just running there ought to be more to chess than an exercise in memory.

Perhaps the important factor of style provides a better justification. Thank goodness that players of similar strength can have quite different styles — witness Karpov and Kasparov. How is that possible? After all, one would suppose that if strong players are presented with the same positions most of the time they will come up with the same moves. Well, in practice they aim for different positions. They tinker with their opening repertoire to get the type of game they like to play. Once congenial preconditions have been established the openings memory-store has served its purpose.

It is, however, very pleasant to come upon a book that deals intelligently with the interesting bit between openings and endgames. A clever new effort in this difficult area is *Test Your Positional Play* (Batsford again!) by Robert Bellin and Pietro Ponzetto. Rightly sensing that good positional play is a craft to be acquired through application they present a course of thirty tests. Each test is based on a critical position, with three possible strategies outlined. The reader makes his choice and then looks up the solution — or the other way round, if you are a born cheat. What particularly appealed to me was the cunning way in which the authors give an equally rosy prospectus for each of the three options. In fact Bellin and Ponzetto show such a talent for the plausible presentation of some mad-cap schemes that Tebbit and Archer should waste no time in getting in touch. They would have to leave out the reasoned assessment, of course.

Problem

White to play and win. Solve this and be assured you can think like a grandmaster. The first three moves are fairly obvious, but the subtlety of White's 4th is delightful.



Solution

1. Qd4 + Kh1 (not 1... Kg2? 2. Qf2 +) **2. Bc6 + Ng2 + 3. Kf1 Qg8!** (only here: 3... Qg7 4. Qf2) **4. Bf3!! Qg5** (or 4... Qg3 5. Qe3!) **5. Qe3! Qf4 6. b3!** zugzwang **Qg3 7. Qe2 Bg1 8. Bxg2 + Kh2 9. Qh5 + .** The deep point is that 4. b3? fails to 4... Qg5 5. Qe3 Qg4 6. Bf3 Qf4 — and it is White who is in zugzwang. Composed by Beliavsky and Kaznelson.

George Botterill

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QUIZ

1) Which former chairman of the Conservative Party has just published a book called *The Amateur: A Companion to Watercolour*?
2) Which former chairman of the Conservative Party once wrote a book called *When The Coloured People Come*?
3) In which country was the President's daughter released by kidnappers last week?
4) In which country did the President go on a 24-hour 'strike' last week?
5) Who said last week: 'How naive of the airport's security officers to think I was a terrorist. Can you imagine anything more stupid?'?
6) Who said of Prince Charles last week: 'I'm sure if you asked he would like to camp out in an Aboriginal site for a couple of weeks. I'm sure he'd dig that. But he can't because of who he is. It's not an easy gig'?
7) Who said of Prince Charles last week: 'His concern is for the inner cities and the need to get resources, experts and government to help ordinary people'?
8) What came to an end in South Yorkshire last week, after 112 years?
9) Who died in Buenos Aires last week, aged 86?

Answers

1) Lord Thorneycroft; 2) John Selwyn Gummer; 3) El Salvador; 4) Iceland; 5) Lady Spencer; 6) Bob Geldof; 7) Rod Hackney; 8) Cortonwood colliery; 9) Ladislao Biro

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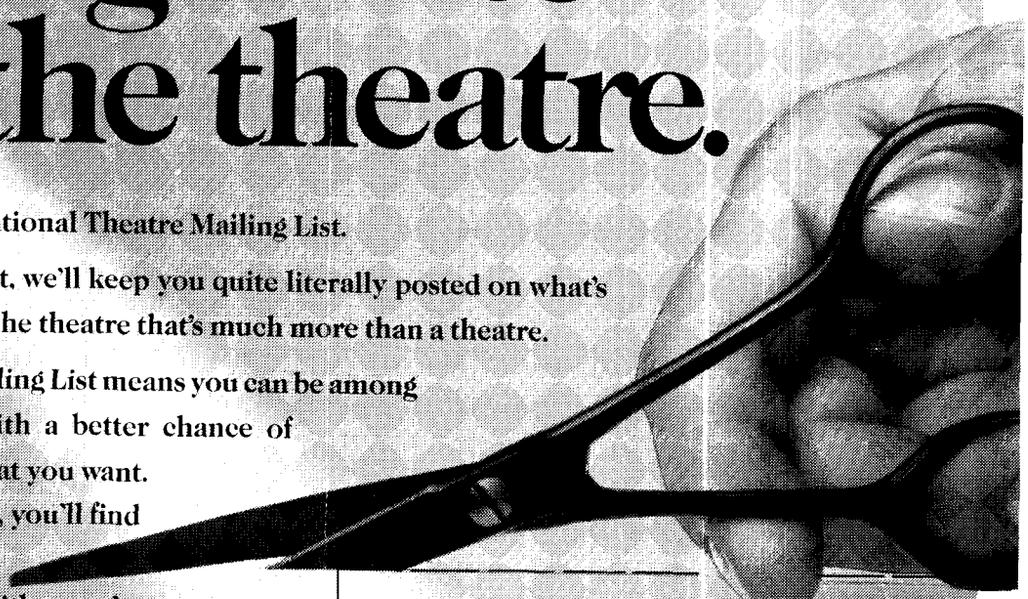

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